

Family Portrait

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY
LENORE COFFEE
AND
WILLIAM JOYCE COWEN

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FAMILY PORTRAIT

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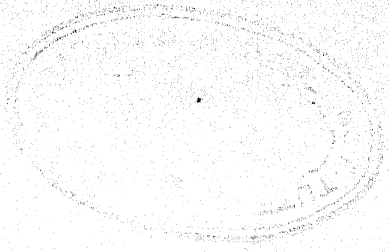
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FAMILY PORTRAIT

STORY OF THE PLAY

FAMILY PORTRAIT was first produced at the Morosco Theatre, in New York City, with Judith Anderson in the leading role. Taking for its theme the Master's own words, "A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house," FAMILY PORTRAIT elaborates in the terms of an ordinary family which acts and speaks as we do today. It is beautiful and dignified. It preaches the spirit of humility and tolerance. It is reverent in its approach to those whose personal lives were so closely bound up with that of the Founder of Christianity. A simple, eloquent and reverent picture of the family of Jesus. In its entirety the story encompasses the last three years of Christ's life. It begins in Nazareth, which Jesus had just left upon His life work, and where His remaining brothers understand only that in the height of the building season He has left them and depleted the working force. It continues in Capernæum, where tavern keepers and promoters have capitalized on His growing power and popularity. It returns to Nazareth and the disillusioning experience among His neighbors. Then, swiftly, it journeys to Jerusalem, where the fickle crowd has turned from its cries of "Hosannah" to shouts of hatred, and to the upper chamber, where after the Last Supper, Mary awaits

LOVE FROM A STRANGER

Mystery. 3 acts. By Frank Vosper, based on a story by Agatha Christie. 4 males, 4 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes.

Produced on Broadway after a great success in London. Cecily Harrington, engaged to Nigel Lawrence who is shortly returning from the Soudan to marry her, wins a big prize in a sweepstake and decides to postpone the wedding and spend a portion of the money on a European trip. She meets Bruce Lovell, a much-travelled he-man, who sweeps the romance, craving Cecily off her feet, marries her and takes her to their out-of-the-way cottage in the country. But Lovell is a homicidal maniac of the most eerie, repulsive type, and is resolved on her murder, just as he has murdered several other women before her. When, by a series of circumstances, Cecily realizes the ghastly fact, and finds that she is caught like a rat in a trap, she plays against time at a supper table opposite a monster who is growing more inhuman every minute. Finally, it is the would-be murderer who is tricked, paralyzed by the poisoned coffee Cecily has prepared.

(Royalty, \$25.00.) Price, 75 cents.

FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS

Comedy. 3 acts. By Terence Rattigan. 7 males, 3 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

Produced with success in London, Paris, and New York. With calm assurance this laugh-piece establishes a little world of its own, wherein, safe from the growing chaos of civilization, nice young people play about gracefully with a humorous little emotion called love. In this unworldly Utopia, where even the study of French is a lark, a group of young men are taking their language studies at the friendly home of their good teacher, Monsieur Maingot. There, also, is frivolous Diana, who, in her good-natured way, has fun leading other fellows on while all the time she is interested in the fellow who thinks he disapproves of her. The young men wrangle in friendly fashion over Diana only to find she is interested in no one save the earnest young diplomat who flees her. Then there is a serious young girl, too, who eventually succeeds in winning the young man who thinks he has won Diana. With auberant, gay, not too serious young people, this light play offers itself to admirable amateur production.

(Royalty, \$25.00.) Price, 75 cents.

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STORY OF THE PLAY

His return from Gethsemane. The final scene is laid again in Nazareth, several years after the crucifixion, where His family still labors under the selfish and blind delusion that they have been disgraced. That is all His family save Mary, who knows that some of His followers are continuing His work.

"Sets an exalted mark in 1939 drama." Robert Coleman, *Mirror*. "One of the most moving expressions of truth and beauty I have ever seen in the theatre." Sidney Whipple, *World-Telegram*.

"This is the most remarkable play on the boards at the present time. It is beautiful, exquisite, tremendously moving. I feel that it ought to be perpetuated, like the Oberammergau Passion Play, and be given a run every season." Dr. John Haynes Holmes.

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Copy of program of the first performance of
"Family Portrait" as produced at the Morosco
Theatre, New York:

Cheryl Crawford
in association with
Day Tuttle and Richard Skinner
presents

JUDITH ANDERSON

in

FAMILY PORTRAIT

a new play by

Lenore Coffee and William Joyce Cowen

Staged by Margaret Webster

Settings and costumes by Harry Horner

Incidental music composed and arranged by Lehman
Engel

"And he went out from thence, and came into his
own country: and his disciples follow him. And
when the Sabbath day was come, he began to teach
in the Synagogue; and many hearing him were
astonished, saying—

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother
of James, and Joseph, and of Juda, and Simon? And
are not his sisters here with us? And they were
offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet
is not without honour, but in his own country, and
among his own kin, and in his own house."

St. Mark, 6: 1-5

6 ORIGINAL PROGRAM—(Continued)

CAST

(In order of their appearance)

MARY	<i>Judith Anderson</i>
DANIEL	<i>Ronald Reiss</i>
JOSEPH	<i>Norman Stuart</i>
A SHEPHERD	<i>Max Leavitt</i>
NAOMI, <i>Simon's wife</i>	<i>Virginia Campbell</i>
JUDA	<i>James Harker</i>
MARY CLEOPHAS, <i>Mary's sister-in-law</i>	<i>Evelyn Varden</i>
REBA, <i>Joseph's wife</i>	<i>Lois Austin</i>
SIMON	<i>Tom Ewell</i>
JAMES	<i>Philip Coolidge</i>
MORDECAI	<i>William Foran</i>
SELIMA	<i>Kathryn Grill</i>
EBEN, <i>a peddler</i>	<i>Philip Truex</i>
MATHIAS	<i>Hugh Rennie</i>
A DISCIPLE	<i>Leonard Elliott</i>
HEPZIBAH	<i>Eula Guy</i>
APPIUS HADRIAN	<i>Guy Spaul</i>
ANNA	<i>Ruth Chorpenning</i>
RABBI SAMUEL	<i>Bram Nossen</i>
MENDEL	<i>Will Lee</i>
A WOMAN OF JERUSALEM	<i>Lois Jameson</i>
A CHILD	<i>Eugene Schiel</i>
MARY OF MAGDALA	<i>Margaret Webster</i>
NATHAN	<i>Ronald Hammond</i>
DANIEL, <i>aged 16</i>	<i>Philip Truex</i>
ESTHER, <i>Joseph's daughter</i>	<i>Josephine McKim</i>
LEBAN, <i>of Damascus</i>	<i>Guy Spaul</i>
JOSHUA, <i>his son</i>	<i>Neal Berry</i>
BEULAH	<i>Ruth Chorpenning</i>

SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE I. *A house in Nazareth. Summer.*

SCENE II. *Wineshop at Capernaum. The following Spring.*

ACT TWO.

SCENE I. *The house in Nazareth. A year later.*

SCENE II. *The following week.*

ACT THREE

SCENE I. *A street in Jerusalem. Spring of the following year.*

SCENE II. *A house in Jerusalem. The same night.*

(The curtain will be lowered during this scene to denote a brief lapse of time.)

SCENE III. *The house in Nazareth. Some years later.*



DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERS

MARY is a slight woman of about forty-five but looks younger. There are understanding and humor in her face, as well as sweetness and great character.

DANIEL is a small boy of six or thereabouts.

NAOMI is an attractive young woman—amiable, rather immature. She is DANIEL's mother.

JUDAH is the youngest son—a boy of seventeen. He is gay and charming and he and his mother are very close.

MARY CLEOPHAS is a rather large, middle-aged woman. She is shrewd of eye, aggressive in manner—but kind.

REBA is a little older than NAOMI, handsome in a dark way, and inclined to take everything very seriously.

JOSEPH is the third son in the family, usually breezy, energetic—a born "go-getter."

SIMON is next to JOSEPH in age, eager to please—
anxious to be on the right side.

JAMES is the eldest, next to Jesus, tall, austere and bigoted.

MORDECAI is a stoutish man of 50.

APPIUS HADRIAN : a rather resplendent Roman.

HEPZIBAH is a large, voluble, middle-aged woman of dubious sincerity.

ANNA: Another neighbor—a smaller, younger woman than Hepzibah.

MARY MAGDALEN is plainly dressed but carries her clothes with a certain air. She has beautiful red hair.

Family Portrait

ACT ONE

SCENE I

The courtyard of a simple carpenter's house in Nazareth.

Upstage Center is the main building, a low plaster house with a wooden door in the Center. On the Left corner of the house is a fig tree in full leaf, under which a round bench has been built. A small table Left of tree. Farther to the Left are a few stone steps which lead up to a wooden annex of the house. At the Right side of the house is a wooden shed that is used as a carpenter shop. It has a carpenter's bench and tools. Above the shed is a wooden sign on which is painted the word—CARPENTER. At Right is part of the plaster wall which surrounds the farm, the visible portion stretching from downstage Right to upstage Right. On the downstage Right corner of the wall is a heavy wooden garden gate, which can be bolted with a heavy wooden bar. In the yard are a large table Left Center and numerous stools, benches, etc.; a chair and wood basket Right of step Center; a chair or stool at Right Center. In the distance are soft rolling hills and far away one can see the outlines of another little farm.

Early morning. Just before the rise of Curtain a COCK crows. At rise of Curtain the stage is empty. A little flutter of breeze rustles the thick leaves of the fig tree.

MARY comes in Center from the house with a tray of dishes and a tablecloth folded over her arm. She is a slight woman of about forty-five but looks younger. There are understanding and humor in her face, as well as sweetness and great character. She moves quickly and deftly. She puts the tray down on the seat under the fig tree and then lays the cloth, spreading it carefully. The COCK crows again. This time it is answered by the bleating of SHEEP and GOATS. MARY starts to put the dishes on the table. DANIEL, a small boy of six or thereabouts, dressed only in shorts, comes from upstairs, rubbing his eyes sleepily. He is dragging a small shirt in his other hand. He yawns as he says:

DANIEL. *(Leaves door open, crosses to c.)* Morning, Grandmother! *(Kisses her.)*

MARY. *(R. of table—turns to him)* Morning, Daniel! How's my big helper? *(Sees him)* Gracious, child, aren't you dressed yet?

DANIEL. A button came off my pants. *(Backs around so we see braces dangle.)*

MARY. Your mother sewed it on only yesterday—

DANIEL. It came off again. I was out playing with the boys after school and—

MARY. *(Kneels R. of table)* —and you don't know how it happened? It just hopped off by itself—*(Hugs him)* Never mind—*(Kisses him)* we'll hold your braces with a pin—this once. But don't tell your mother! *(She takes a large pin from her belt)*

and fastens brace to pants top. As soon as pinning is done she helps him into his shirt.)

JOSEPH. *(Sticks head out door up L. to speak)* Hasn't that boy gone for the goat yet?

MARY. He can't until I fix his braces.

JOSEPH. Well, hurry it up, will you, Mother? We have to have breakfast early this morning.

MARY. Yes—I know. *(Continues fastening)* There—I hope this will hold—at least until you get home from school. What did you learn there yesterday?

DANIEL. *(Putting on his shirt—MARY helps)* Oh, lots of things. The days of the week—the months of the year. You know, I think it's a waste of time for me to learn all that stuff, if I'm going to be a carpenter. I can whittle like anything already—

MARY. There you are! Now, hurry and get the goat, dear. *(Hears shepherd's PIPES)* The shepherds are out with their flocks already. And we're in a rush for breakfast this morning.

PIPER. *(Passing by gate R.)* Good morning, Daniel!

DANIEL. Hello!

MARY. Good morning!

DANIEL. *(Starts to go—stops R.)* Do I have to go and get that ol' goat again? *(Crosses to c.)* I got her yesterday. It's Esther's turn.

(MUSIC of pipes starts off.)

MARY. *(Above table)* Esther had an earache last night. Aunt Reba's keeping her in bed.

DANIEL. Well, I got her the morning before, too. And she *butted* me—hard! *(Rubs self.)*

MARY. You don't want her to butt Esther, do you? Especially with an earache.

DANIEL. That isn't where she butted me!

(PIPES stop.)

MARY. (*From above table crosses to DANIEL C. She speaks quickly, in a low voice*) Look, darling—it's very important that we don't upset anyone this morning any more than we can help.

DANIEL. Why?

MARY. Well—something happened last night that disturbed your uncles very much.

DANIEL. Father, too?

MARY. Yes. So I want everything to be as pleasant as possible. It will help me a lot. Now, go along like a good boy and get the goat. (*DANIEL unbars gate—puts bar downstage against post. She adds*) I'm baking cookies this afternoon.

DANIEL. (*Smiling*) I'll run.

(*MARY gives him a little hug. Crosses below table.*

DANIEL exits gate. MARY half laughs, half sighs. NAOMI comes from the house, leaves door open. She is an attractive young woman—amiable, rather immature. She is DANIEL's mother.)

NAOMI. (*Up C. with small bowl of eggs—one egg in her hand*) I was thinking—the boys ought to have an egg for breakfast if they're going to do that job out in the country. (*Puts bowl on tray on table*) It's a long way.

MARY. (*Below table above bench*). That's a good idea. (*Pause*) Simon up yet?

NAOMI. (*Gets chair from up C.—starts to table with it*) He's dressing.

MARY. (*Setting table—below it—moving to L. end*) Did he—did he say anything when he came to bed last night?

NAOMI. He kept me awake half the night talking. (*Puts chair at upper R. end of table, steps below it. Adds impulsively*) You know, I think they ought to show you a little more consideration—and I told him so!

MARY. (*Crosses from L. end of table—below it to NAOMI and puts an affectionate hand on NAOMI's arm*) You're a good girl, Naomi—like my own daughter. But if you don't agree with your husband—don't say anything.

NAOMI. Of course, Simon by himself wouldn't be so bad if Joseph didn't keep him all stirred up.

MARY. Well, brothers are like that. (*NAOMI starts to speak "But I don't see"*) Would you like to mix the porridge for me? That'll be a real help.

(*NAOMI exits c. with bowl on tray, and MARY picks up the small wood basket L. of shop and starts towards the carpenter shop just as JUDAH, the youngest son—a boy of seventeen, comes down the stairs whistling. Closes the door after himself. He is gay and charming and he and his mother are very close.*)

JUDAH. (*Crosses to MARY, takes basket. They are up c., JUDAH L. of MARY*) Morning, Mother! (*Kisses her.*)

MARY. Morning, Judah!

JUDAH. Here—let me do that.

MARY. Early breakfast—

JUDAH. I know. (*Crosses R. of MARY*) Isn't it just like Mordecai? (*MARY gets stool from near post L. JUDAH—talking over his shoulder just inside shop*) After holding back on that roofing job all summer, he sends word last night that he wants the work started today. (*Starts putting chips in basket*) And he won't pay a cent more than the price we made when labor was cheap.

MARY. (*Puts stool lower R. end table*) You'll have a hard time making money on it—but you may get other jobs through it. (*To above table with dishes.*)

JUDAH. (*In shop*) What was the row last night?

(Picks up basket—crosses L. of door) I heard old James going on at a great rate—so I slid off to bed—

MARY. (Avoiding an answer—above table) You were late coming home—

JUDAH. (To below step up c.) I went to see Miriam— (Puts basket down up L.C.) And, Mother, what do you think? (Easily side-tracked) Aaron let us talk together alone—for five whole minutes!

MARY. (Smiling) And what did you say?

JUDAH. Oh, we didn't say anything. I just looked—and she smiled. It was wonderful! (Pause, then eagerly) You know, I think I'll take that job at Choraizon. If I'm going to get married, I'll have to earn more money.

MARY. Married?

JUDAH. I'm going on seventeen!

MARY. (Above table) So you are. Well, Miriam's a lovely girl. But are you sure it's all right with her father?

JUDAH. Why not?

MARY. I've always thought he was kind of ambitious. Still, we've nothing to be ashamed of.

JUDAH. (Crossing c. toward MARY) Well, I told you he left us alone!

MARY. So you did. (Crosses to him. Puts her arm around him) My baby getting married! (The gate opens and MARY CLEOPHAS, a rather large, middle-aged woman, enters. She is shrewd of eye, aggressive in manner—but kind. She is MARY's sister-in-law and neighbor. She leaves gate open. She has a small bowl in her hand. MARY greets her with genuine eagerness and affection. Meets her R.C. They embrace) Mary Cleophas! My, but I'm glad to see you!

MARY CLEOPHAS. I just came to borrow some barley.

JUDAH. (Up L.C.) Good morning, Aunt Mary!

MARY. (Hesitating) Judah, take the wood inside.

(JUDAH takes wood off up c., closes door. MARY crosses below MARY CLEOPHAS to close gate.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (Crossing L.C.) Something's happened.

MARY. (At gate) Yes.

MARY CLEOPHAS. What is it?

MARY. (With a cautious look around—crosses to R. of MARY CLEOPHAS) Jesus went away last night.

MARY CLEOPHAS. What did the boys say?

MARY. Oh, they're furious!

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well, I knew they would be. And I can't say as I blame them. (Pause) How'd it come about?

MARY. He just told them he was going. You know how he is once his mind is made up. Nothing they said could shake him. And he went.

MARY CLEOPHAS. I suppose they blame you.

MARY. Oh, yes. "I encouraged him—didn't think of my other children." I don't think breakfast is going to be very pleasant—no one speaking to anyone. (Puts hand on MARY CLEOPHAS' arm) Stay and have it with us. It won't be so bad with you here.

MARY CLEOPHAS. I never knew anyone to stop being unpleasant on my account—but I'll be glad to stay. (Sits R. end stool—face c.) So he left. (Puts bowl on table upper R. corner) How long will he be gone?

MARY. I—I don't know—exactly—

MARY CLEOPHAS. You mean he didn't say?

MARY. (R. of MARY CLEOPHAS—uneasily) I don't suppose he *knew*. He'll stay until he's done what he set out to do. (Then, with a little rising panic in her voice at MARY CLEOPHAS' dubious expression) He's always come back before! That time he went away with John—he came back, didn't he? And the forty days he spent in the desert—he came back. (She is trying to convince herself) He's *always* come back.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Of course. I was just wondering. *(Pause)* I hope you did right letting him go.

MARY. If you could have seen his face! I never saw anyone look so happy. As if he was *ready* for something.

(There is a COMMOTION outside the gate.)

DANIEL. *(Outside gate)* Ouch—come here, you old goat. Quick! Someone help me!

MARY. That's Daniel with the goat—What is it, darling? *(MARY hurries to the gate and DANIEL tumbles on floor down L. of MARY.)*

DANIEL. She got away! And she *butted* me—just like I told you she would! And in the same place, too! *(He rubs his little bottom. JUDAH comes from the house.)*

MARY. *(Crosses below table)* Judah, go out and help Daniel with the goat, dear.

JUDAH. *(Has jug—picks up DANIEL and exiting through gate)* Come along, young fellow. *(Leaves gate open.)*

DANIEL. *(Exiting)* I hate that old goat.

(REBA comes out of upstairs house—has towel. She is a little older than NAOMI, handsome in a dark way, and inclined to take everything very seriously. Closes door.)

MARY. *(Meets REBA below L. steps)* Good morning, Reba!

REBA. Good morning, Mother!

MARY. How's Esther's ear?

REBA. Better. *(Crossing down steps)* I put warm oil in it. But the baby's having *such* a time.

MARY. His teeth again?

REBA. *(Nods)* What with his teeth and Esther's

ear I've had an awful night. And poor Joseph—he never slept a wink!

MARY. (*Deliberately misunderstanding*) Well, when you have children they do keep you awake. His father walked the floor many a night with him—

REBA. (*Interrupting*) It wasn't that. Joseph was too worried to sleep. No one realizes how high-strung he is—or they wouldn't upset him. (*Crosses R.—turns to MARY CLEOPHAS*) Oh, you're out early, aren't you, Auntie? (*Kisses her.*)

MARY. (*To REBA—crosses up L. of table*) Aunt Mary is having some breakfast with us this morning. Will you tell Naomi? (*REBA crosses up L. To MARY CLEOPHAS*) We're having eggs—the boys have a job of work at Mordecai's. And it's a long walk.

(*REBA exits upstairs—door open.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises, works around table down R. to L.*) I wouldn't let those boys bully me.

MARY. (*Busy with napkins at table*) I won't. But I do like to have things pleasant. It's hard on Reba and Naomi, too—they're such good girls.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*L. of table*) Reba sounded a bit touchy.

MARY. Oh, well—you don't know what Joseph may have been saying to her. After all, they have to side with their husbands. (*JOSEPH enters down L. stairs. He is the third son in the family, usually breezy, energetic—a born "go-getter," shuts door. This morning he is silently belligerent—only waiting for the word to set him off. MARY, with nervous cheerfulness*) Good morning, Joseph—breakfast's nearly ready.

(*JOSEPH doesn't answer.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*L. of table—MARY above it*) Well, what makes you so gay and chipper?

JOSEPH. (*Stops when MARY CLEOPHAS speaks*) Oh, good morning, Aunt Mary! I didn't see you. (*He goes past her to the shop and disappears from view temporarily.*)

MARY. You see how it's going to be! (*Smiles*) I'll get the porridge. (*Takes barley bowl off into house.*)

(*NAOMI comes out of the house with the eggs and puts them on the table. Now all becomes activity. SIMON appears at house door. He is next to JOSEPH in age, eager to please—anxious to be on the right side. He, too, is far from cheerful. He passes MARY. In door, rolling sleeves up, says:*)

SIMON. Morning, Mother! (*To R. of bench.*)

MARY. Morning, Simon! Sit right down. Everything'll be ready in a moment. (*DANIEL appears from the gate and makes a rush for the table*) Daniel, did you wash your hands after bringing that goat in?

DANIEL. They're clean—honest they are! (*He shakes his head.*)

MARY. Run and do it quickly, dear.

NAOMI. (*Up R. corner of table—removing eggs from tray—SIMON below table. MARY CLEOPHAS L. of table*) Do as Grandmother says.

(*DANIEL rushes into the house, stumbling as he goes.*)

MARY. I never saw a boy yet who wanted to wash. (*MARY CLEOPHAS around L. to below table. Turns to SIMON*) I think you were the worst, Simon. (*Smiles*) But they turn out all right. (*She exits into house.*)

SIMON. (*To MARY CLEOPHAS. NAOMI puts tray on floor, crosses above to L. of table*) What brings you out so early, Aunt Mary?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crosses below table to sit chair up R. of table*) Well, I got out of the wrong side of the bed this morning, so I thought I'd come where I could have a pleasant breakfast.

SIMON. (*Gives her a suspicious look, which she meets blandly*) I hope you get it here. (*Sits R. end of bench below table. NAOMI sits down L. of table on bench.*)

(JOSEPH comes out from the shop—REBA comes from the house.)

REBA. (*With pitcher of water, puts it on table. BOTH pause for a moment up L.C.*) Esther's sound asleep—worn out, poor little soul. (*REBA crosses above table to upper end L. stool. JOSEPH crosses below table to downstage end of L. bench below REBA.*)

MARY. (*Comes out carrying a bowl of cereal—follows REBA—gives her bowl of cereal, etc., to put on table*) Breakfast, everyone! (*To the OTHERS*) Where's James? (*As she speaks JAMES comes from house behind MARY. Crosses up R. of house door with prayer book—he greets her*) Oh, there you are—breakfast's ready. (*Calls*) Judah! Got the milk? (*Moves c. toward gate.*)

JUDAH. (*Entering through gate with jug of milk—shuts gate*) Coming! I've got to wash my hands.

(MARY takes jug and starts to serve milk. JUDAH goes into house. JAMES is the eldest, next to Jesus, tall, austere and bigoted. DANIEL comes from house—crosses below JAMES to below table R.)

MARY. (*Crosses below table to between NAOMI*

and JOSEPH) Do sit down, everyone—before things get cold. Eggs—James?

(DANIEL rushes past JAMES in doorway—brushes past MARY to climb over bench and sit between SIMON and NAOMI. REBA serves first MARY CLEOPHAS, then DANIEL, then NAOMI, then JOSEPH, then herself. Puts bowl in Center of table, sits above JOSEPH. MARY serves milk between JOSEPH and NAOMI.)

JAMES. (*Up R.*) I'm fasting.

MARY. (*Pouring milk into the cups set at each place along the table*) That's the second time this week.

MARY CLEOPHAS. For goodness sakes, James, unbend and have some eggs.

JAMES. (*To MARY—crosses to place L. of MARY*) I'll take a glass of water.

MARY CLEOPHAS. That sounds nice and hearty!

(*ALL are seated now except MARY. There are three empty places.*)

SIMON. Pass the eggs, please.

JOSEPH. What's the matter with your reach?

(*NAOMI passes eggs.*)

REBA. Here, Joseph—take some porridge. (*Serves him.*)

(*There is silence, broken only by the sounds of spoon against plate and cups being put back on the table.*)

MARY. (*Pours milk between SIMON and MARY CLEOPHAS—eager to make conversation*) I've—I've

some nice news for you. Something I think will please you all—

JAMES. That will be a novelty. (*Sits.*)

MARY. (*Continuing*) I think Judah's going to get engaged— (*Pauses hopefully.*)

JOSEPH. So we lose another carpenter!

(*General hubbub until JUDAH mentions Jesus.*)

MARY. (*Crossing above table—R. of JAMES*) Oh, no—he'll live right here in town. It's Miriam—

JOSEPH. (*Brightening*) Old Aaron's girl! Why, that's a good match!

MARY. (*Happily*) I thought you'd be pleased.

NAOMI. (*Anxious to help along*) She ought to bring a fine dowry. (*To DANIEL*) Not so much in your mouth at once.

(*JUDAH comes out of the house in high spirits—shuts door.*)

SIMON. (*MARY stands in her place—R. of JAMES. Greeting JUDAH*) Well—well—well—so Judah's got a girl!

JUDAH. (*His face falling—steps back*) Who told you? (*R. of stool. R. of table. Looks around table*) Mother—you did!

MARY. (*Contritely*) I didn't think you'd mind, dear.

JOSEPH. Our baby brother!

SIMON. Going to grow a beard, Judah?

JUDAH. (*Both pleased and confused*) Miriam doesn't like beards.

REBA. (*Teasing him. MARY pours water for JAMES*) How does she know?

JUDAH. (*Steps back c.*) Oh, Mother—make them stop! Besides, it isn't settled yet—

JOSEPH. It *isn't*?

MARY. Oh, it's practically settled. Aaron left them alone together last night— (*Picks up porridge bowl.*)

JOSEPH. (*Pleased*) We'll have to tell Mendel to get busy— (*JUDAH gives click of annoyance, and turns to JOSEPH*) You *have* to have a marriage broker to arrange about the dowry— (*Breaks off*) The rich shoemaker's daughter—our Judah's doing well for himself—

JUDAH. (*Hurt*) I don't care *who* her father is—it's Miriam I'm thinking of— (*Sees empty place next to MARY*) Where is Jesus, Mother? (*ALL turn to him*) I wanted him to be the first to know. (*Passes plate*) Porridge, please—and lots of milk.

MARY. (*Nervously*) Oh, I forgot—and set his place.

JUDAH. Isn't he having any breakfast? (*Sits R. of table below MARY CLEOPHAS. MARY serves him—then herself—returns bowl to table.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*To MARY*) Doesn't the boy know?

JUDAH. Know what?

JOSEPH. (*Pushes his chair back and begins with gusto*) It seems, my dear Judah, that your *favorite* brother has decided that he has other work to do—work much more important than the mending of roofs and the building of barns—so he's left us with the Mordecai job on our hands without so much as a "by your leave"!

MARY. (*Who is serving herself with porridge puts the bowl down on the table sharply*) That's not fair! You know he's been going to do this other work. You've *always* known—but you've kept him here time after time when he wanted to go. (*Sits R. of JAMES*) And as far as this Mordecai job is concerned, you knew perfectly well that Jesus told you right from the beginning, that he wouldn't be here to do it. (*JOSEPH interrupts*) You're all my sons, but it's time you

learned to stand on your own feet and not rely on him for everything. (*She pauses, a little breathless*) Goodness knows he's the kind that'll carry as big a load as anyone'll give him.

JUDAH. You don't mean he's gone for good!

MARY. No, dear—of course not—

JUDAH. When's he coming back?

MARY. Well, that's hard to say—

JOSEPH. (*Interrupting*) He hasn't taken us into his confidence. We don't count. We're just his family!

DANIEL. What has Uncle Jesus done, Mama?

NAOMI. Nothing, dear.

DANIEL. Then *why* is everyone angry with him?

SIMON. (*Hands DANIEL's milk cup to him*) Drink your milk—and don't ask questions. (*To NAOMI*) I wish someone would teach the boy manners. (*NAOMI looks hurt and whispers to DANIEL, who picks up his cup and drinks*) Personally, I've nothing against his preaching—but I don't see why he can't do it on Sundays—or when work is slack.

JAMES. If he wants to preach, why isn't he a Rabbi?

MARY. He doesn't agree with all their ideas.

JOSEPH. Oh, he's going to startle the world—(*JUDAH turns downstage—not eating*) with something new, I suppose! (*Adds sourly*) He's the best carpenter in the family. We won't get half the good jobs without him.

SIMON. And he knows how to get along with people. They liked to do business with him.

JAMES. (*Rises*) Surely you must all see how unpleasant this is for *me*. After all, I stand for something in the community—

JUDAH. (*Facing downstage*) I'll miss him so! I'll be lost without him!

MARY. (*Looks at him*) So will I!

(*JUDAH turns to MARY.*)

JAMES. (*Disregarding this*) His views and behavior are so irregular. It's embarrassing for me. After all, my friends are some of the most important men in town. As for these new ideas of his—we believe in the law, according to the law—and no deviation.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Then how's the world ever going to progress?

JAMES. (*With bigoted emphasis*) It's better off without progress if you have to break the law to do it. (*Sits.*)

NAOMI. (*Rising, crossing to gate*) Come along, Daniel—you'll be late for school.

(DANIEL runs to kiss MARY, then off. NAOMI puts her shawl on while waiting for DANIEL. NAOMI shuts gate after she and DANIEL exit.)

JUDAH. I don't see why he hasn't got a right to his own life! He's thirty years old! And he's got a lot of good ideas, too! (*Kneels on stool*) If people would live the way he wants them to—the world would be a fine place! Room for everyone. (*Look from JOSEPH*) And he's practical. Believes in paying people decent wages—says a man is worth his hire. But not to worry about being rich. That there're other kinds of riches besides money! (*Sits again.*)

JOSEPH. (*With sarcasm*) Hear! Hear!

SIMON. Quite the little orator!

MARY. Why shouldn't Judah defend his brother!

JAMES. What I want to know is—why did it have to happen to us? Why did we have to have a fanatic like that in the family?

MARY. He's always had these ideas, ever since he was a little boy. You remember when he was only twelve and we left him in the Temple—

JAMES. (*Interrupting*) Yes, yes, Mother. We all know that by heart! And if he hadn't been encour-

aged then he wouldn't be doing this now. (*Smugly*) When I was a young boy—

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Interrupting him*) Get out, James! You were *born* middle-aged.

MARY. You know—he always felt he had a special work to do. That time he went with John—

SIMON. A fine end John came to!

MARY. (*Ignoring this*) And when he stayed away those forty days—he'd made up his mind—

JOSEPH. We know, Mother. We had to listen to him.

MARY. Suppose he has gone out to spread his kind of thinking? After all, what is it? To be kind—to be fair—to love your enemies and do good to those that hate you. What *harm* can come of that?

JOSEPH. Not to *him*, perhaps—but what about us?

SIMON. Yes—we've built up a good business here—

MARY. (*Interrupting*) With his help.

SIMON. (*Uncertainly*) That's so, Joseph.

JOSEPH. (*Half rises—across table to SIMON. REBA pulls him down again*) So it gives him a right to ruin it?

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well, they say you never know a family till you've had breakfast with them. (*With decision*) You're making too much of the whole thing. He's gone away before—and he'll go away again.

JOSEPH. (*Coldly*) It isn't as if he had anything important to say. Kindness! You've got to startle people if you want to get anywhere—and who's going to be startled by kindness?

SIMON. I say, let him alone until he gets all this out of his system. Then he'll be glad enough to come back and pick up his saw.

JOSEPH. (*Quickly*) Say, he didn't take his tools with him, did he?

MARY. No.

JOSEPH. (*Rises—crosses to below table*) I've had my eye on that saw. (*Goes towards shop up R.*)

SIMON. (*Rises—following him*) I think I'll take his plane. Mine's pretty dull—

JOSEPH. (*Turning—JOSEPH and SIMON both up R.*) Wait a minute! You got a new plane only last year. I ought to have this one.

SIMON. (*L. of JOSEPH. REBA up L. stairs, exits, closes door. JAMES moves to JOSEPH's place*) But you're taking the saw! You can't have them both!

(*During this action MARY and MARY CLEOPHAS start to clear the breakfast table.*)

JOSEPH. (*Magnanimously*) We could cast lots for them.

(*JOSEPH moves to shop. SIMON down c.*)

SIMON. (*Gets tools. Gloomily*) All right. (*JOSEPH goes to shop door; puts hat on. SIMON c. to himself*) But I'm certain to get the saw.

(*As they are about to enter the shop there is a pounding at the gate. JUDAH rises, opens gate and says:*)

JUDAH. Good morning, Mordecai!

MORDECAI. (*A stoutish man of fifty, enters gate—to up c.*) You are all still here? Not started yet? Didn't you get my message last night?

JOSEPH. (*At shop*) We're getting ready now—

(*JAMES moves to downstage end bench.*)

MORDECAI. Getting ready! And half the morning gone! When it might rain any minute? And my grain

all stored in the long barn—and you know how bad the roof is!

(SIMON puts tool kit down L. of shop.)

JOSEPH. (*Down c. to MORDECAI*) Get the rest of the tools together, Judah. (JUDAH crosses up to shop R. of JOSEPH. To MORDECAI) Don't forget, Mordecai, that we've been after you all summer about that barn, while you shopped around to get the job done for less money.

SIMON. And when you *couldn't*, you came rushing back to us—and at a price made when materials were cheap.

(MARY rises—takes tray to below table—stands between table and bench—piling dishes.)

MORDECAI. (*Changing his tone*) Well, maybe I *was* wrong—but let's not waste time arguing now. It's been a bad enough year for the farmers as it is—what with the Romans telling us how much grain we shall plant—and how many goats we can raise. (*He sighs.*)

(JOSEPH goes into shop for tools. SIMON crosses to up R. of MARY CLEOPHAS.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. But think of the pleasure you get out of kicking about it, Mordecai. You know, I think one of the chief duties of the government is to give the people plenty to kick about—then they haven't time for their other troubles.

(JOSEPH and SIMON have got their tool-kits from the shop. JUDAH brings tool-kit down R. above post.)

JOSEPH. (*Crossing down L. of JUDAH—SIMON comes to L. of him*) Did you put that plane in—and the saw? The ones that belong to Jesus?

MORDECAI. (*He looks around*) I don't see him. Where is he?

(*There is sudden silence.*)

JOSEPH. (*Two steps down L.*) Why—er—he's not here just now.

MORDECAI. The best carpenter in the country! The reason I gave you boys the job was on account of him.

MARY. (*To JOSEPH—collecting dishes on tray below table*) Don't you think you'd better tell Mordecai?

MORDECAI. (*Steps down L.*) Tell me what?

JOSEPH. (*L. of MORDECAI*) Well—er—speaking of Jesus—as a matter of fact—he's—er—he's gone away.

MORDECAI. Gone where?

JAMES. Our brother felt he had important work to do—

MORDECAI. *Important!* What's more important than my barn? It's the biggest barn in Nazareth! (*With dawning realization*) You mean he isn't going to be on the job?

JOSEPH. (*Interrupts*) But we can get—

MORDECAI. (*Hysterically*) You've swindled me! Cheated me! I'll have you up before the authorities—(*He pauses for breath*) It's off! The deal's off! (*Starts out gate.*)

JOSEPH. (*After him*) But you can't do that—we've got a contract!

MORDECAI. Sue me! (*Exits—leaves gate open.*)

JOSEPH. (*Turning to MARY—crosses c., then up c.*) There, Mother—now see what you've done!

MARY. (*Astonished—below table*) I?

SIMON. (*Crosses down to MARY—she pushes him up out of her way and crosses below him to gate*) Telling him now—before we started the job—

*MARY. (*Stands for a moment, feeling the blame in the eyes of those around her, then steps to the gate with sudden decision. Calling*) Mordecai! Mordecai!

MORDECAI. (*Off*) What is it?

MARY. Come back here!

MORDECAI. (*Steps inside gate*) Well—

(*There is a moment's silence while the BROTHERS stare curiously at her, then MARY speaks to MORDECAI in gate.*)

MARY. Just a moment, Mordecai! How did your agreement read?

MORDECAI. (*Triumphantly*) That the work should be done by four sons of the House of Joseph—

MARY. You'll still get four sons—Joseph, Simon, Judah—and James.

JAMES. (*At L. bench, reading prayer book, rises—startled. MARY steps back*) Why, Mother—surely you don't expect me—

MORDECAI. A lot of strength he's got after all his prayers and fasting! I won't have it!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises—stands below stool R. of table*) Now, Mordecai—if a man goes to a dealer and orders four donkeys and doesn't specify four white ones—and three browns ones and one grey donkey are delivered, the law will hold him to the agreement.

JAMES. (*Stuffily*) I don't call that a very happy comparison.

(*Before MORDECAI can answer there is a clap of THUNDER, followed by a few drops of RAIN. MORDECAI holds his hand out to feel the rain.*)

MORDECAI. (*Crosses up c.*) Thunder! Never mind who comes—my grain will be spoiled! (JOSEPH, JUDAH and SIMON *go to shop for cloaks*. MARY CLEOPHAS *moves bowl of spoons to fig tree bench*) Get my roof mended! Hurry, now! You, too, James! (JAMES *crosses R. in protest*) Don't get huffy! (*Goes off gate below MARY, who then crosses L. at once. Boys are off through gate.*)

JUDAH. (*Calls*) Goodbye, Mother— (*Then JOSEPH, then SIMON—ALL are talking—leave gate open.*)

MARY. (*Crossing L. to MARY CLEOPHAS*) Oh, dear, that wasn't wrong, was it? But when they all stood and looked at me—I felt we had to do something!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crossing L. of her to below table and above bench*) We did pretty well.

(JAMES *stops on his way to gate. MARY moves to him.*)

JAMES. See here, Mother—I'll do this, even though I don't want to. It's against my principles to work on a fast day—

MARY. Thank you, James.

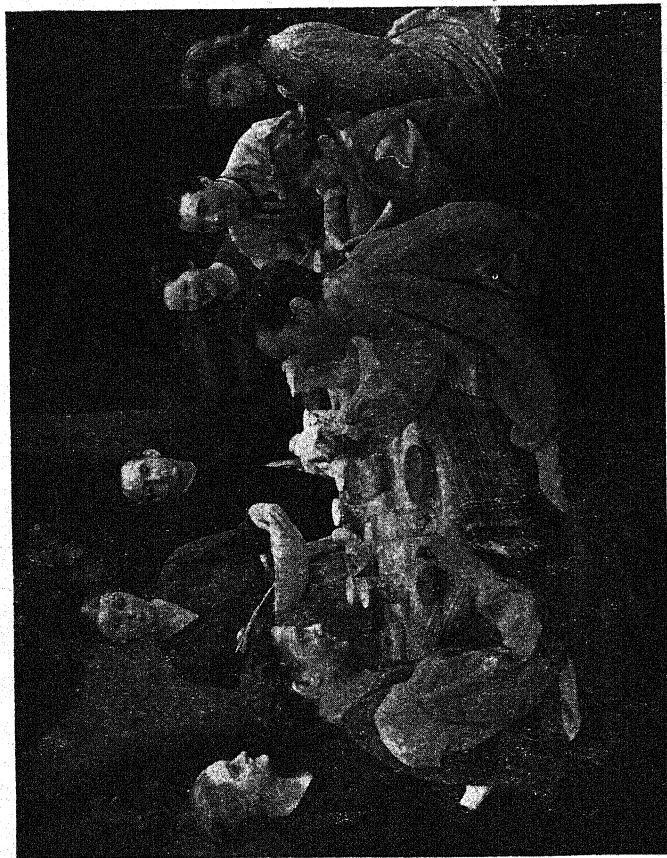
(MARY CLEOPHAS *puts all wooden spoons in porridge bowl—places bowl R. end of fig tree bench—then finishes stacking tray with everything except two jugs.*)

JAMES. *But—only on one condition—*

MARY. What is it?

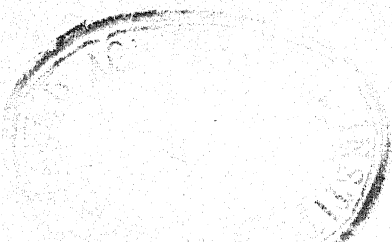
JAMES. If, within a reasonable length of time, Jesus doesn't give up this notion of his and come back to his job here—we must *get* him back. (*No answer from MARY*) You'll agree to that, Mother?

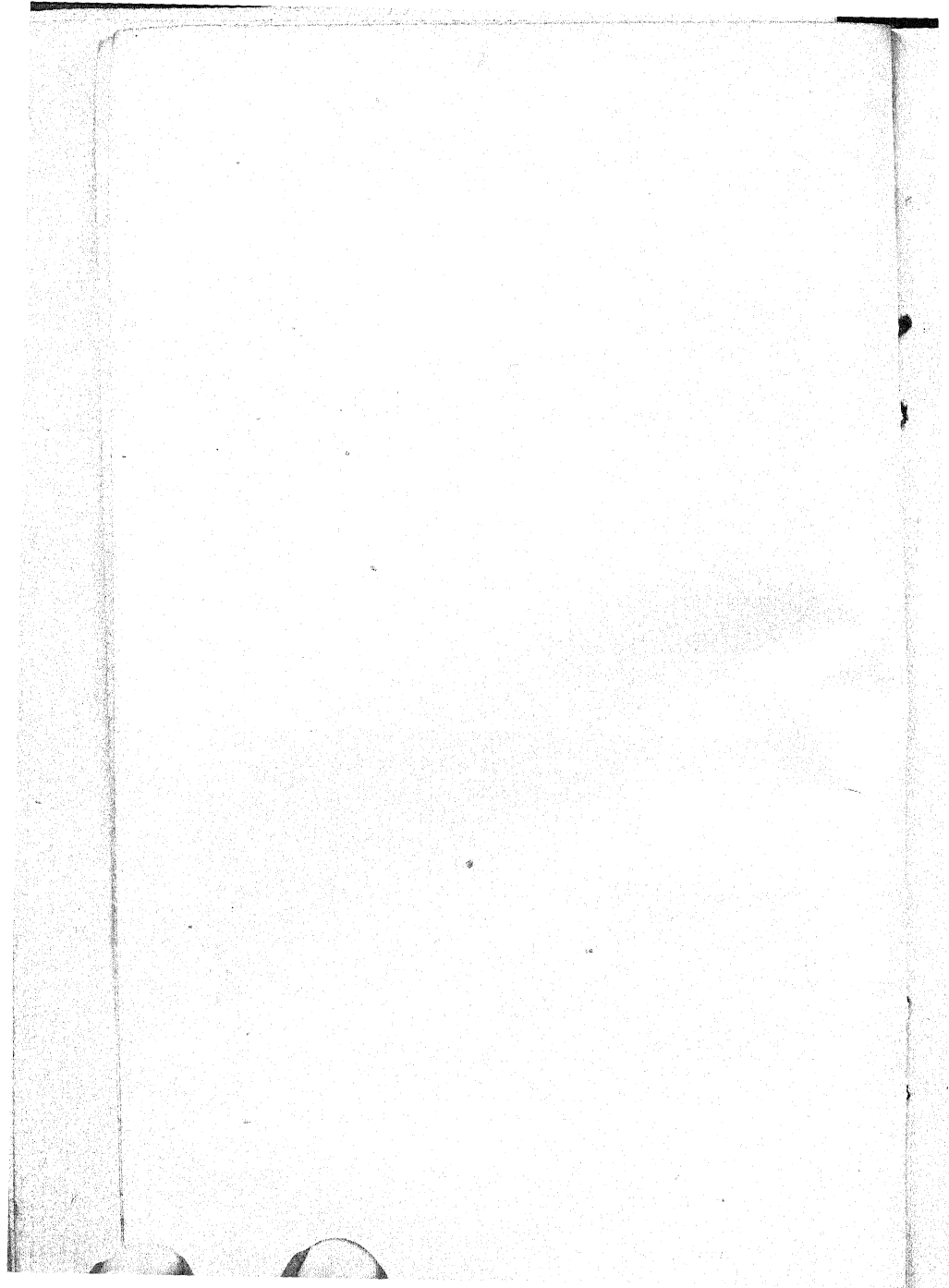
MARY. Yes, James.



See page 22

ACT I





(WARN Curtain.)

JAMES. And you won't oppose us?

MARY. No, James. (*He puts hat on—crosses to gate. She adds hesitantly*) And I— (JAMES turns to her) I appreciate your helping us out.

JAMES. (*Stops near gate*) And, Mother—

MARY. Yes, James.

(MARY CLEOPHAS takes tri ~~mm~~ goes to c. step.)

JAMES. If the Rabbi asks for me, say I'm taking my brother's place—that I felt it my duty. (*Exits—leaves gate open.*)

MARY. Yes, James.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*On step*) Did he mean that about bringing Jesus back?

MARY. I suppose so. (*Crosses to table.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. And you agreed to it?

MARY. Maybe they'll forget about it. Maybe it will all just—blow over. (*Looks up at rain—shivers*) It's a cold rain. I begged Jesus to take his warm cloak. He'll be wet through.

REBA. (*Comes from upstairs*) The baby's asleep. (*Wipes forehead and upper lip*) My, I'll be glad when he's weaned. Nursing makes me perspire so!

MARY. I know. Sit down and I'll come in and warm something up for you.

MARY CLEOPHAS. I'll do it. (*Exits to house.*)

NAOMI. (*Enters from gate—closing it—distant THUNDER is heard. NAOMI crosses to fig tree bench and takes pitchers*) I've just been talking to Daniel's teacher—he's doing so well in school.

MARY. Of course he's way ahead of his age. (*To herself—forgetting NAOMI*) If he walked all night he must be at the Sea of Galilee by now. The place feels empty without him. (*Looks at sky*) It's going to rain the whole day— (*To NAOMI*) What do you say

we put up some fruit? (MARY picks up cloth and bowl of spoons) We've all those peaches in the house— (BOTH exit into house c.)

(THUNDER—soft as Curtain falls.)

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE II

A wineshop in Capernaum. About noon.

The wineshop is built on a pier at one end of the Lake of Tiberius (the Sea of Galilee). The Center part of the building is the wineshop proper with a bar, tables, stools, etc. At Right is the entrance door leading in from the porch, which extends further Right. On it are a number of empty barrels. At the end of the porch some boats are tied. Inside, at upstage Right, is a small bar, behind which are shelves full of jugs, bottles and other tavern equipment. Upstage, Left of Center, is a long table with a bench running its full length on the downstage side, so that the people sitting on it have their backs to the audience. A stove up Left. In the back wall of the inn are two small windows. Downstage Right and Left Center are two tables with stools. In a wing of the room at Left is another small table with two stools (for the use of MARY and the DISCIPLE). At upstage Left of Center portion of the inn is the entrance to the kitchen.

At rise of Curtain the seats are all full. EBEN, the peddler, is displaying his wares to a WOMAN, down Right. AMOS, a hungry-looking waiter, is

waiting on the tables, while SELIMA, who runs the place, is busy in the bar. SELIMA calls to EBEN.

SELIMA. (*Behind bar*) Eben! Any signs of the boats yet?

(EBEN *steps to the door and looks out. SELIMA yawns. EBEN turns back.*)

EBEN. There's a mist over the lake. I can't see past the shore-line.

SELIMA. (*With annoyance*) The boys told me they'd be back in time for lunch. Heaven knows they made enough noise going out this morning. (*CHILD climbs on barrel*) They'll have to be quieter if I'm going to spend all day and half the night on my feet running this business.

EBEN. (*Leans against downstage R. end bar*) Is your brother out of town again, Selima?

SELIMA. (*Nodding*) Gone off to Sidon— (*AMOS goes to kitchen*) —and with business so heavy here, too. Of course, this rush may not last forever. What would happen to this place here if Choraizon or Bethsaida made a good offer to Jesus? (*A CUSTOMER at long table calls "Selima"*—SELIMA *nods and makes out check. Eager to continue*) The town of Capernaum does little enough for him—and he's the biggest attraction they ever had. Suppose some other town makes an offer and off he goes? What then?

EBEN. Does he show any signs of moving on?

(AMOS *comes to above table L.C. with food, then to SARAH for money—and exits L.*)

SELIMA. No, but you never can tell. When he gets talking or walking you can't say when or where he'll stop. Take this morning. The boys should have been back from their fishing hours ago—but Jesus decided

to go with them. If he gets to making lessons out of things they'll forget all about coming home. He may wind up on the other side of the lake and stay there! That's why I keep saying—"Sell now."

EBEN. Well—I don't know. Since things are going so well I'd stick it and take a chance.

SELIMA. (*Gives check to table R.C. With a touch of scorn*) Take a chance! That's a regular man's argument. Why take chances? I said that to my brother when he talked about making our house larger. "Why go to all the extra expense?" I said. "Jesus doesn't mind where he sleeps." (*CUSTOMER at table up L. gives money to AMOS, who takes order to SELIMA. EBEN sits R. of long table after looking out door R. She changes to a confidential tone*) I must say we never had anyone who was less trouble. (*AMOS to table L.C. with wine—then to bar to give SELIMA money*) Why, we once had John the Baptist and his followers at our house and they nearly drove us crazy! (*As AMOS passes with a cup of wine. SELIMA cranes her neck to look into the cup and then halts AMOS with a jerk of her head. He comes closer to her. In a whisper*) Haven't I told you a dozen times not to fill the cups so full? It makes a difference of a gallon or more on a busy day. I'll measure out the next lot myself!

(*AMOS gives wine to table L.C. SELIMA exits to kitchen, followed by AMOS, as MARY, accompanied by JAMES, JOSEPH and SIMON, come into the wineshop from up R. from L. It is obvious they have come a great distance as they have on cloaks. MARY is a little timid and has lost some of her assurance of manner as we see her in these unfamiliar surroundings. She speaks quietly but firmly.*)

MARY. (*To downstage post on porch*) No, James, I'll wait here.

JAMES. But, *Mother*—

MARY. I've come this far with you, as I said I would. But I'm not going to embarrass my son in front of a crowd of strangers. (*Adds, a little choked*) I don't see how I could be expected to.

SIMON. After all the scandalous things we've heard!

JOSEPH. There's no sense in not facing facts, Mother. He's simply out of his mind!

(*AMOS goes to kitchen.*)

MARY. All the more reason for seeing him alone. I'm not going any farther.

SIMON. Maybe Mother's right—maybe we ought to wait and see him tonight—

JOSEPH. Then stay here with her! We're not going to wait. We came here to accomplish something and the sooner we do it the better. (*Exits up R. to L.*)

JAMES. (*To MARY*) Don't you see, Mother—he's making himself and us ridiculous. It's time someone took him in hand. (*SIMON tries to stop him. After a pause*) It's for his own good as well as ours—

MARY. Yes, James.

JAMES. (*After a pause*) Well— (*Crosses SIMON to go—turns*) we're going. (*JAMES goes off up R. to L. above SIMON.*)

(*SIMON stands irresolutely for a moment, then as he sees they are really going without him, turns to MARY.*)

SIMON. You're sure you'll be all right here alone, Mother?

MARY. (*With a little ironic smile—starts to cross to L.*) Yes, Simon.

(*SIMON hurries after his two brothers while MARY*

looks around for a place to sit. It is quite crowded and there is only one vacant seat at a table for two, at table down L. Before she can take it DISCIPLE enters from kitchen and takes it—she remains up Center R. MATHIAS comes in upper L. JAMES and MATHIAS meet outside at L. window. SIMON and MATHIAS meet in up R. corner. SELIMA follows DISCIPLE on and sees MATHIAS enter R. He crosses below R.C. table—she meets him there. SELIMA brushes by without even noticing MARY.)

MATHIAS. Selima!

SELIMA. Well, Mathias— (*Crosses to him—L. of R.C. table*) Welcome to Capernaum. When did you leave Sidon—and how is your family? (*As SELIMA speaks she casts a quick glance around the room, seeking a place to seat him. There is no vacant seat, but CUSTOMER nearly finished at L.C. table—L. of it. To CUSTOMER*) You don't mind giving up your seat, do you? You've nearly finished and Mathias has come a long way. (*CUSTOMER hesitates, but SELIMA has him by the elbow and half up before he can protest*) Here you are. (*Above L.C. table. She clears the table briskly*) What brought you here this time?

(*While SELIMA is busy seating MATHIAS the CUSTOMER who has been ousted from the seat grumbles to the MAN at the kitchen door as he stands eating from his plate. At the same time, WOMAN who has been sitting at table beside the DISCIPLE, who is writing, gets up, crosses and sits down R. of L.C. table. MARY looks questioningly at CUSTOMER who was ousted. With his mouth full he pantomimes, to MARY—"You take it." MARY sits down R. of the DISCIPLE at the table down L. The table is well downstage and MARY faces the audience.*)

MATHIAS. (*Puts bag down stage against L.C. table—settling himself in his seat*) A load of goods to sell— (*WOMAN rises and leaves table L.C.*) since they tell me everyone has so much money around here. And I've brought a fine appetite with me, too. How about a nice piece of fish? I've been travelling inland for the past month.

SELIMA. As soon as the boats come in, which should be any minute. How about a bowl of hot bean soup to warm your stomach while you're waiting?

MATHIAS. Fine!

(*AMOS enters from kitchen with tray and food for*
DISCIPLE. SELIMA then calls him and puts soiled
dishes from L.C. table on his tray.)

SELIMA. (*Calling to servant*) Amos! A bowl of hot bean soup for Mathias.

(*As AMOS goes toward kitchen MARY stops him and gives an order.*)

MARY. (*To AMOS*) I'd like a bowl of that soup, too—if I could—and some bread.

(*CUSTOMER goes off R.; talks to CHILD. MARY sits quietly listening to SELIMA and MATHIAS, shrinking back a little in her seat.*)

MATHIAS. How are the fish running, Selima?

(*CUSTOMER at table up L. exits R. EBEN goes to bar.*)

SELIMA. (*Above L.C. table*) Better than in years.

MATHIAS. Do you think this man Jesus has anything to do with it?

(*A WOMAN starts on from up L. CUSTOMER goes to*

up R.—they meet—she says to him “The boats are in” and he returns to R. door.)

SELIMA. Do I think so? I should say he has! The old prophets used to pray and hope for God to do the rest. But do you know what this man does? He goes out and takes a hand at the nets. Like this morning. Whenever he pulls, the nets are always full. We only hope the price of fish keeps up.

(There is a COMMOTION at the front door.)

CUSTOMER. *(Who left—sticks head in door R.)*
The boats are in!

(CUSTOMER and WOMAN exit R.—CHILD follows. A WOMAN exits R.—meets FISHERMAN up R.; after her goes EBEN. Two CUSTOMERS at table up L. rise and look out window up L. MAN exits R. to up R. corner. WOMAN and EBEN go off up R. to L. CUSTOMERS at up L. window return to places. MAN returns to below bar.)

SELIMA. *(To MATHIAS)* Good—you'll be having your fish in less than no time.

FISHERMAN. *(Comes through the crowd at the door R., carrying a huge fish. Below table R.C.)*
Here's a beauty, Selima.

SELIMA. Take it into the kitchen and tell the cook to give you a bowl of soup. *(Crosses L. of MATHIAS)*
Where are the boys? Are they coming in here to eat?

FISHERMAN. They're not hungry. *(Excitedly. Almost in kitchen door, turns)* We had a fine catch! Enough for hundreds of people! *(Exits to the kitchen.)*

(MARY listens to this and follows the FISHERMAN with her eyes as he exits.)

SELIMA. (*Proudly*) See? What did I tell you?

MATHIAS. (*Impressed*) I'd like to meet this man myself. Where can I find him?

SELIMA. He'll be preaching—

(*AMOS enters from kitchen with soup and wine for MATHIAS and MARY—serves MATHIAS first, then MARY—then up R. to CUSTOMER to give him wine.*)

SELIMA. But you'd better get there early if you want to hear anything. Otherwise, you'll get caught in a tangle of beds and stretchers.

MATHIAS. Beds and stretchers?

SELIMA. Cripples and invalids—they all go to him.

MATHIAS. And he cures them?

(*AMOS goes to MARY.*)

SELIMA. (*Above table L.C.*) Certainly! And he's going to teach my boys how to do it, too. (Two CUSTOMERS sit R. of L.C. table. AMOS gives wine to one of them) Then send them out by themselves. (*Look from MATHIAS*) I don't see why they shouldn't be able to—once they've been shown how.

MATHIAS. But won't that take the crowds away from here, if people can stay home and see miracles performed right on their own doorsteps?

SELIMA. That's what I keep telling my brother. If they move on—where are we?

(*AMOS exits to kitchen.*)

MATHIAS. (*A bit too eagerly*) You don't happen to know where Jesus might be going next?

SELIMA. (*Suddenly cagey—draws back*) I didn't say he was going anywhere. (*She pauses. To MATH-*

IAS) I'd better be seeing about your fish. (*She starts away, crosses L. and stops at R. of table before MARY and the DISCIPLE and speaks patronizingly*) How's the soup?

MARY. (*Timidly*) The soup is all right—

SELIMA. (*Aggressively*) What's the matter with it?

MARY. It—it seems a bit thin—

SELIMA. You've got a country taste, if you don't mind my saying so. All city people prefer thin soup. (*Takes in her plain apparel*) I suppose you've come here to see our Jesus?

MARY. Yes—I have—

SELIMA. (*Talking partly for MATHIAS' benefit*) Well, you've come to the right person if you want to get in touch with him. I can arrange it.

MARY. (*Impressed*) You can?

SELIMA. You see—my two sons are with Jesus, and we think the world of him and he thinks the world of us. I suppose you have some sons? (*MARY nods—SELIMA rattles on*) Then I'm sure you will agree with me it's very important for a man's future to have people like him. The right people.

MATHIAS. (*Banging on table*) Look here! What about my fish!

(*A CUSTOMER from table R.C. crosses to below bar, leans across it playing with game. MATHIAS removes hat and puts it on bag—below table.*)

SELIMA. (*Pats his shoulder*) By the time you finish your soup it'll be here. (*To MARY*) You'll excuse me? (*She exits into kitchen.*)

(*DISCIPLE, who has apparently been absorbed in his manuscript, looks up, meets MARY's rather bewildered gaze, and smiles.*)

MARY. (*A little wistful*) Does she really know so much about him?

DISCIPLE. (*A little humorously*) Well, naturally, her sons being with him, she knows a little more than most people—but not as much as she pretends.

(AMOS enters from kitchen; crosses to bar to tend it.
MATHIAS starts to write. Pause.)

MARY. It's been wonderful to sit here and listen to all these things about him.

DISCIPLE. (*Curiously*) If you're so interested, why don't you join the crowds and listen to him?

MARY. (*Confused*) I'm waiting for someone. Besides, crowds frighten me a little.

DISCIPLE. It's always like this. You'll never get a chance to see him alone.

(MATHIAS begins to listen.)

MARY. (*Drawing him out*) And they all believe in him? They all think he's wonderful?

(A CUSTOMER from table up L. goes to below bar, talks to AMOS and other CUSTOMER.)

DISCIPLE. (*With glowing faith*) For me—he's the beginning and the end.

(MATHIAS turns down L. to listen.)

MARY. Oh, I didn't mean I had any doubts about his being wonderful. I only meant—did the people think so—

DISCIPLE. (*Simply*) I can only speak for myself. I would die for him.

MARY. What does he do—that makes everyone follow him?

DISCIPLE. Oh, nothing that I can explain. (*Searches for words*) He just sits out on a hillside—or in a field—and talks to people. And when they go away—they feel better.

MATHIAS. (*Who has been listening intently between gulps of soup, gets up and comes to down R. of MARY*) Excuse me—but I couldn't help hearing what you were saying. Perhaps you can give me some information I want.

DISCIPLE. Well—I don't know—

MATHIAS. Do you know anyone who has real influence with this man Jesus? One of his disciples?

DISCIPLE. (*Simply*) I'm one of his disciples.

(*MARY looks at him with added interest.*)

MATHIAS. (*Eagerly*) Well, (*Crosses to close above DISCIPLE*) I've got a proposition I want to make to you. (*He looks towards the kitchen and then hurries on*) If you can get Jesus to leave this town and come to Sidon I'll guarantee him all reasonable expenses—a salary for six months—and a nice bonus besides!

DISCIPLE. (*Indignantly*) No one would dare to go to him with a proposition like that.

(*SELIMA enters from kitchen with MATHIAS' fish and stands listening just above MATHIAS' chair at L.C. table.*)

MATHIAS. Why not? It's perfectly sound. I'm a respectable business man—my word's as good as my bond.

DISCIPLE. (*Rises*) He wouldn't be interested.

MATHIAS. Nonsense! (*Touches DISCIPLE'S R. arm—he pulls away*) Everyone's interested in a good business deal. (*Lowering his voice*) If you could help me, I'd make it worth your while. How much?

Come now—every man has his price— (DISCIPLE pulls away. SELIMA bangs fish down on L.C. table. MATHIAS hears bang. He straightens up, greatly confused, and fumbles for a pepper grinder on table down L.) Just borrowing the pepper— (Returns to L.C. table.)

SELIMA. (Above table—indicating the fish) How do you know it's going to need pepper when you haven't tasted it yet? No, Mathias— (Two CUSTOMERS go off up R.) I was standing right behind you—I heard every word you said. And I know what you're up to! You've got your eye on Jesus and the business he brings. Well, let me tell you one thing—neither you nor anyone else is going to get that business away from here until we're good and ready to let it go!

MATHIAS. It seems to me you're taking a lot on yourself—

SELIMA. (R. of L.C. table) Not any more than's been given me. You seem to forget that my sons—

MATHIAS. Please, Selima—don't tell us about your sons again! And as to business—Jesus isn't going to spend the rest of his life here, is he? And when he does move on, he can move in my direction, can't he? (He adds slyly) I might need a smart woman to run the place—someone who knows how to handle the crowds. (He looks at the fish) And feed them right. (MATHIAS sits L. of L.C. table. Resumes pleasantly) How about my eating that fish while it's nice and hot? (AMOS takes order from table R.C.; exits to kitchen) There's no one can do a fish as well as you can, Selima. Your brother's a lucky man. I hope he gives you a good cut of the profits.

SELIMA. Not what he ought to—

MATHIAS. (Mildly) You don't say? Well, that's what comes of doing business with relatives. (Takes

mouthful of fish) My—my—what a fish! And what a sauce!

SELIMA. I thought maybe it might need just a scrap more lemon—

MATHIAS. (*His mouth full*) Not a thing—perfect! (*CUSTOMER at table up L. rises—calls SELIMA. Two MEN start from off up L.; get on stage R. before “even when he’s angry.” MATHIAS lowers his voice*) And what a sauce! (*He smiles up at SELIMA, who melts.*)

(*SELIMA crosses to bar to take money from CUSTOMER at up L. table who pays and exits R. DISCIPLE smiles a little—while MARY looks distressed.*)

DISCIPLE. Don’t look so upset. These things happen all the time.

MARY. But what does Jesus think of it? Doesn’t it make him angry?

DISCIPLE. He knows how people are. How they have to struggle to make a living. He doesn’t expect to change human nature over night. (*A CUSTOMER goes to chair up L. Another CUSTOMER to long table up L.*) Mind you—if anyone came to him *direct* with a proposition, like that—(*He laughs*)—well, they wouldn’t forget it in a hurry! But, even while he was angry, he’d understand—and make excuses for them.

MARY. (*Smiling*) Yes—that sounds like him. Just like him.

MATHIAS. Some wine, here—

(*SELIMA starts to pour it from jug of watered wine, then decides he is a good customer and takes special jug—brings good wine to table, pours, urges him to taste it.*)

MARY. I remember once when one of his brothers tried to drive a sharp bargain—

DISCIPLE. His brothers? Then you know the family—you must come from Nazareth. Do you know Jesus, too?

MARY. I know him very well. You see—he's my son.

DISCIPLE. Your son! (*Looks at MARY intently*) Why, you know—there is a resemblance. (*MARY raises her hands in a little gesture of deprecation*) And when you smile! (*MATHIAS tastes wine*) It's quite like him!

SELIMA. (*Above MATHIAS turns as she hears this. Crosses below MATHIAS to down R. of MARY*) Quite like who?

DISCIPLE. (*With innocent malice*) Like "our Jesus." There's such a resemblance between them—

SELIMA. I don't see it! And certainly no one knows him better than I do— (*Turns R. to look at MATHIAS.*)

DISCIPLE. (*Quietly*) This lady is his mother.

(*There is a dead silence. SELIMA gulps, then struggles toward recovery. She flashes a guilty look in the direction of MATHIAS and then plunges in garrulously*)

SELIMA. (*In a low voice*) Oh, well—if you're his mother—you can understand why I was so upset just now. (*AMOS comes from kitchen to take orders from table up L.*) You've no idea how hard I work trying to protect him, just like he was my own son! The way people take advantage of him and try to use him—I don't know what he'd do if someone like me didn't step in and— (*Calls to AMOS, who crosses to her*) Amos, a little service here. Bring a portion of that fresh fish—tell the cook to have it piping hot. No, never mind—I'll go and fix it myself—then I

know it'll be right. (*She bustles off to the kitchen. Amos follows her off.*)

DISCIPLE. (*Smiling*) Did you see her face when I said, "This lady is his mother"?

MARY. I shouldn't have let you do it. (*Smiles a little*) But I was getting a little tired of hearing her go on as if he belonged to her! (*She pauses*) I can't tell you how glad I am I came here! (*After another pause, she adds*) Wait until I tell my sons what people think of him.

DISCIPLE. Your sons came with you?

(*FISHERMAN enters from kitchen to stop below table up L. to talk with CUSTOMERS. EBEN enters up R. from L. with pack, puts it down, down R. on porch, then crosses to bar. CUSTOMER from table R.C. crosses to bar.*)

MARY. Yes! All but my youngest son, Judah. He's away working in the country. He's going to get married. But he wouldn't have come with us even if he'd been home. *He* believes in Jesus—

DISCIPLE. (*Startled*) Don't the others?

MARY. (*After a pause*) Perhaps I shouldn't tell you this—still, you're one of his friends. (*In a lower voice*) You see, when Jesus left home, his brothers weren't in sympathy with him at all.

DISCIPLE. You don't mean it!

MARY. Well, you know how families are. Then, to make things worse, we began to hear stories—from peddlers and salesmen traveling through— (*EBEN and CUSTOMER at bar take dice—sit off R. on porch until Curtain*) and finally the Rabbi himself came to see us. Well, from what the boys heard they thought he'd gone out of his mind. So nothing would do but they had to come here to take him in hand.

DISCIPLE. You mean— (*FISHERMAN sits R. of*

table up L.) have him give up his work? (MARY *nods*) But that's impossible!

MARY. Oh, I wasn't in favor of it. That's why I came along. I didn't know what they might do without me. But now I can tell them a few things— (*Sees her SONS pass up R. window*) There they are now! (*She turns toward the R. door*) Oh, dear, I hope they haven't done anything foolish! (*She rises.*)

(JAMES, JOSEPH and SIMON enter. They look disgruntled, particularly JAMES. JAMES sees MARY—crosses down below R.C. table, puts his hat on table. JOSEPH and SIMON give the crowded shop a quickly appraising look.)

JAMES. Mother!

MARY. (*Enthusiastically—crosses down stage to JAMES*) Wait until you hear what I've got to tell you. I wish you could have heard it all for yourselves—the most wonderful things! You'll be so proud—

JAMES. (*Furiously*) Yes? Well, we've got something to tell you.

MARY. Why, what's the matter? Didn't you see him?

SIMON. (*Crosses down R. of JAMES. JOSEPH above L. of JAMES*) We couldn't get close for the crowd.

JOSEPH. But we sent a message to him.

MARY. (*MATHIAS crosses up to L. of up L. table—stands talking to FISHERMAN. Apprehensively*) What sort of message?

JAMES. We said simply, "Your mother and brothers are here and want to see you." And what sort of answer do you think he sent back—by one of those common fishermen?

MARY. I don't know.

JAMES. "*Who* is my mother—and *who* are my brothers?"

MARY. (*Incredulously*) He said *what*?

JAMES. (*Enjoying repeating it*) He said, "Who is my mother—and *who* are my brothers?"

MARY. (*In a half whisper*) Oh, no!

JAMES. (*His voice rising*) Ask Joseph here—

MARY. Ssh—not so loud!

JOSEPH. (*Lower voice—leans toward MARY*) That's what he said, Mother. (*Pause*) A fine message to send to his own flesh and blood!

MARY. Did anyone hear him?

JAMES. (*With a short laugh*) Only about three thousand people! (*Pause.*)

MARY. Oh, there must be *some* explanation! He wouldn't do a thing like that for no reason!

JAMES. You always make excuses for him. (*Starts to cross up—MARY stops him.*)

MARY. Is that *all* he said? Just—"Who is my mother—and who are my brothers?" (*Stumbles over words.*)

SIMON. Oh, no—

JAMES. As if that wasn't bad enough, he went on and made it worse.

MARY. (*Apprehensively*) Worse?

JAMES. There were people on all sides of him. You couldn't move edgeways—and what do you think he said, Mother? After he got our message he looked around at all of them and said, "*You* are my mother and *you* are my brothers!" To *them*, mind you! To that ignorant crowd!

MARY. (*A complete change of mood*) But that changes everything! Why didn't you tell me that in the first place? Frightening me like this and making me think he didn't want to see me! With all those people listening he used our message to make a lesson of! That's the way he teaches. Don't you see?

JAMES. No, I don't see! (*WARN Curtain.*)

MARY. (*Her voice rising*) But, James! That message wasn't for us—it was for the people who were listening. He was trying to tell them that because

they followed him and his teachings—they were his brother and sisters—his mother, too!

SIMON. (*Steps down R. of JAMES*) But, Mother—you don't understand.

MARY. (*Continuing without lowering her voice*) This thing about all men being brothers—why, he's said it to me hundreds of times! That's one of the things he believes in most! You'll see, when he's (*Crosses up to tables*) through talking to the crowd, he'll come here looking for us. And you ought to be glad you didn't get to him. What would you have said in front of all those people? "We want you to come home? We want you to come back and help us mend roofs and barns? We think you're out of your mind?"

SIMON. (*Timidly*) I must say he seems to be doing well.

MARY. Doing well? Look at the crowds—that ought to tell you something.

JOSEPH. I'd like a chance to air my views and have a crowd follow me.

MARY. (*Her voice rising as she points to MATHIAS*) Why, an important man from Sidon was trying to get Jesus to come to his town—but the people here won't let him go. (*Her eye falls on the DISCIPLE as she speaks*) And you should have heard what that young man—over there thinks of him! He thinks the sun rises and sets in him. He said he'd die for him! (*MARY crosses to DISCIPLE, who crosses below his table to MARY*) I'd like you to meet my sons—(*Crosses C. DISCIPLE follows—she turns to him. She pauses, then realizes she can't make the introduction and adds*) Oh, I'm sorry—I'm afraid I don't know your name—

DISCIPLE. Judas. Judas Iscariot.

(*The Curtain begins to descend slowly as MARY introduces her sons.*)

MARY. (*Her L. hand on DISCIPLE's arm*) This is
James—and Simon—and Joseph—

(*Each steps forward as name is spoken.*)

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE I

The house in Nazareth. One year later.

The large table is Right Center, with bench below it and stool Right of it; other bench up Left.

In bright sunlight, REBA is taking freshly washed and dried sheets from the wall at background. NAOMI is seated under the fig tree up Left, shelling a pan of peas. They are laughing at rise of Curtain.

REBA. (*Folding a sheet above R.C. table*) I never saw her so excited before—

NAOMI. (*L. under tree*) You'd be, too, if it was your son. (*REBA almost drops sheet*) I know how I'd feel if Daniel—but you're as excited as she is.

REBA. (*Laughing*) Of course I am! And you are, too. Nothing like this ever happened to us before. (*Crosses to wall R. for sheet and line.*)

NAOMI. (*Interrupting*) If only the boys get home—

MARY. (*Off up L.*) Naomi! Naomi, dear! Have you finished shelling those peas?

NAOMI. (*Answering*) Almost. (*She turns to REBA*) Do you know, my fingers are all thumbs today—I'm so nervous!

MARY. (*Off*) And Reba! Are the sheets dry yet?

REBA. (*Answering*) I'm just folding them.

MARY. Then put them in the lavender chest for a few minutes before you spread them on his bed. (*MARY comes to house doorway and stands there for a moment*) Have Joseph and Simon come back yet?

NAOMI. Not yet.

MARY. (*On step c.*) They would be late on a day like this! Be sure and call me the moment they come. I want to tell them the news myself. I've got to watch that young lamb I'm roasting. (*She exits into house c.*)

REBA. She wouldn't trust *me* with it. I don't suppose she'll let anyone else cook for him all the time he's here. (*She finishes sheets and goes up L. steps to collect washing.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Enters from gate with a covered basket of chickens. Leaves gate open—stops between gate and upper side of table*) Whenever there's anything important to do, all the men around here disappear; Joseph—Simon—where are they?

NAOMI. They haven't come back from the country yet.

MARY CLEOPHAS. I thought they were coming home last night. And James? Where is he? Meditating, I suppose! Can you imagine—I had to go all the way to the market to find someone to kill these chickens? Where's Mary? (*Puts chickens on table down R. corner.*)

REBA. Inside—roasting a lamb.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Standing over a hot fire on a day like this! But I can't blame her. You should have heard all the things they're saying in the market place.

REBA. (*Crossing to L. of table—starts gathering linen*) Are they excited?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Folds tablecloths—piles them on down Right corner of table*) Excited! That isn't the word! If you only knew the plans that are being

made! It's the first time in all my years in Nazareth that I ever knew them to make such a fuss over the return of one of their own people. •

REBA. It's a big honor for us, isn't it?

MARY CLEOPHAS. I should say it is! People spoke to me in the street who never looked at me before! And there were one or two I enjoyed snubbing! (REBA finishes folding linens and starts in the house with them. MARY CLEOPHAS hands her the chickens) Here, take these in when you go and get Mary away from that hot stove— (REBA crosses up L.; stops above MARY. MARY CLEOPHAS pauses as MARY comes out) Oh, there you are!

MARY. (MARY is shaken out of her usual efficiency and stands uncertainly, speaking half to the OTHERS, half to herself) I know I've forgotten something! Clean linen, water for the bedrooms, new wicks for the lamps—and I've my bread still to bake. Oh, yes— (Stops REBA) Reba, get out my best hand towels—with the blue embroidery—and put them in his room. (REBA exits to house) And let me see—what else? Oh, dear—I must think!

NAOMI. (Rises with one bowl—peas shelled. Affectionately, to MARY CLEOPHAS) She's been going on like this for hours! (To MARY) Now, don't worry, Mother. Everything's going to be lovely. And, Auntie—you stay here and keep her from getting too excited. (She exits to house.)

MARY. (To MARY CLEOPHAS) Coming home! I just can't believe it! Coming home!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (Above table folding towels) If you don't sit down and rest a minute you won't be fit to see him when he gets here.

MARY. (L. end of bench below table) I was never so happy in all my life! (MARY CLEOPHAS crosses down L. of her) When I think how I worried about him. The nights I've lain awake wondering if he was cold or hungry or—or safe even. (Sits) And now

he's coming home! And not just coming, either. But *invited!* (*Pause*) Has—has anyone said anything about it in town?

MARY CLEOPHAS. Anyone? You're joking, Mary! Why, no one talks of anything else.

MARY. But we only knew it this morning—

MARY CLEOPHAS. They're certainly rushing to get ready for him! (*Crosses below MARY to gate*) You should see the streets and the food-shops! And the strangers that are here in town already! (*Closes gate*) There won't be an empty bed in any of the inns by nightfall. (*Turns to down R. of MARY*) People are coming in from the seacoast, too.

MARY. (*Happily*) And all to see my son!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Sits on bench R. of MARY*) I don't suppose there's a mother in Nazareth that doesn't envy you, Mary.

MARY. If only Judah were home—how he'd love to see his brother! Still, if things go here anything like they did at Capernaum, they'll never let him get away. You know, I'm trying so hard to be calm—to look calm, anyway—and then I suddenly remember the way he smiles and the way he speaks—and realize that I'll be actually seeing him—with my own eyes—today! And my heart just turns over!

MARY CLEOPHAS. It's—it's been pretty hard for you, hasn't it?

MARY. Oh, I don't mean to complain. Other people need him. And, after all, I had thirty years. (*Pause*) I hope there won't be too many people around *all* the time. I'd—I'd like to have him to myself for a while. At first, anyway.

MARY CLEOPHAS. You haven't a chance. The house will be full of people who never knew we existed before!

HEPZIBAH. (*Outside the gate*) Mary—Naomi!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises*) There's one now! (*Crosses to gate.*)

HEPZIBAH. Will someone open the gate—my hands are full.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Opens gate—stands above it*) Well, Hepzibah. What have you got there? (*Closes gate.*)

HEPZIBAH. (*HEPZIBAH enters courtyard with a stack of dishes. She is a large, voluble, middle-aged woman of dubious sincerity*) I just had to run in for a minute. (*Crosses below MARY CLEOPHAS toward table*) I know how busy you are, with your boy coming home. Isn't it wonderful to have a son who's such a success? (*Puts plates in MARY CLEOPHAS' hands.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Few steps c. from gate*) What am I supposed to do with these?

HEPZIBAH. (*Below R. end stool at table—ignoring this and speaking to MARY*) I thought you might need a few extra dishes— (*MARY CLEOPHAS crosses L. to above table*) if you don't mind my being a little neighborly. There will be so many people coming— (*Examining cloths on table*) I've got some fine tablecloths, too—you're bound to run short.

MARY. (*Pleased*) Oh, thank you, Hepzibah. We have enough linen—but I'll be glad of the extra dishes.

HEPZIBAH. (*Between stool and table. Rattling on*) Have you got all the chickens you need? (*MARY CLEOPHAS slams dishes on table*) They tell me the market is sold out. But I don't suppose that should worry you. From what I hear, your son can feed as many people as come to him hungry. It must be wonderful having a boy like that.

MARY. (*Again trying not to be proud*) I'm glad everyone says fine things about him.

HEPZIBAH. Fine things! (*Sits R. end of bench below table*) You needn't be so modest, Mary. Not with an old friend. If he was my son, I'd be shouting from the housetops!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Above table examining plates*)
I can believe that!

HEPZIBAH. (*Gives her a look—moves closer to MARY*) Do you suppose, after he's settled and you've had time to visit together, I could drop in one day? He will be staying here, won't he?

MARY. Where else would he stay?

HEPZIBAH. (*A little confused*) I just thought some prominent people might want to entertain him. Still this is his home. (*Look at MARY CLEOPHAS. Pause*) Well, (*Rises—crosses R.*) if there's anything else you want, just ask for it. It'll be a pleasure—

MARY. Thank you, Hepzibah.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Goodbye—

HEPZIBAH. Goodbye— (*Exits gate—closes gate.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Putting dishes down with a clatter. MARY puts towels on table*) I never could abide that woman!

MARY. Still, it was nice of her to bring the dishes—

(JAMES enters from stairs L.)

REBA. (*Runs on from house*) All the chickens are on the spits—

NAOMI. (*Shouts from house*) Ask Mother if I should put butter in the peas now or later—

REBA. (*Also shouts*) Naomi wants to know if she should—

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Interrupting—motions "we can hear"—hands her dishes*) Later.

(REBA exits into house with plates. MARY CLEOPHAS L. above table. MARY puts folded towel on table.)

JAMES. (*On 3rd and 4th step—annoyed by the atmosphere*) What's all the excitement? I spend a few hours in quiet meditation and come back to find everyone racing about and shouting—

MARY. Oh, James—haven't you heard?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crosses down c. between MARY and JAMES*) Your brother's coming home today!

JAMES. Judah?

MARY CLEOPHAS. No, no! Not Judah! Your brother Jesus!

JAMES. (*His face darkening*) What's he coming here for? Had enough of his fishermen and tramps!

MARY CLEOPHAS. I must say, James—you're never a disappointment! One can always count on you being disagreeable! (*Turns up to L. of table.*)

MARY. (*With quiet dignity*) Jesus is coming back—by special invitation—to preach in the Synagogue.

JAMES. (*Crossing at L. of R.C. bench*) Mother! Who's been filling your head with ideas like that?

MARY. (*Rises. Hurt—her voice a little unsteady*) Go and ask Rabbi Samuel if it isn't so. He told Mary Cleophas himself, didn't he? It will be a big event—(*Her voice trails off.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crosses to JAMES*) The whole town knows it. Walk out and ask the first man in the street. Live in *this* world, James!

JAMES. (*Without conviction*) I don't believe it! (*Pause*) But I'll soon find out. (*Crosses down toward R. Sees BROTHERS; steps back while they enter gate.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*To MARY*) That's taken the wind out of his sails!

MARY. (*To MARY CLEOPHAS*) I might have known that something like this would happen to spoil things. (*MARY CLEOPHAS sits under fig tree. MARY turns to JAMES, who stops near gate, suddenly indignant. SIMON and JOSEPH, with their tools and bundles, enter as she speaks. JAMES stops to listen.*) And I'm not going to have it! This is his first visit home. He's been invited back here as an honored guest—and if the town can treat him that way, I think his own

brother might do as much. (*JAMES exits gate, above BROTHERS. JOSEPH closes gate at once. She sees SIMON and JOSEPH*) Come here, Simon! (*SIMON to below stool*) And you too, Joseph! (*JOSEPH to R. of SIMON*) You heard what I said just now to James? I mean that for you, as well! I want peace and quiet in this house while Jesus is here—and I mean to have it!

JOSEPH. (*Crosses below SIMON to MARY*) But, Mother, *we're delighted!* We heard the good news as we came through town and hurried home to be the first to tell you.

SIMON. (*Moves down R. behind JOSEPH*) It's fine! He'll be honored by the whole community!

JOSEPH. He'll make this place famous! We're proud of our brother, aren't we, Simon?

SIMON. I should say we are!

MARY. (*After a pause*) So—you're proud, are you? It's all right now, what he says and does?

SIMON. Of course, Mother!

JOSEPH. (*Heartily*) Of course it's all right! Why, everybody believes in him—they're making tremendous plans for Sunday. (*Suddenly to SIMON*) Say, they might call on us for a word, or two!

SIMON. (*Both pleased and alarmed*) What'll we say if they do?

JOSEPH. Oh, just something about how honored we are—(*JOSEPH and SIMON start up for shop*) our brother's worth at last being recognized by his home town—(*Stops*) and that Nazareth's chief claim to fame may be that he was born here. (*Walking towards shop*) And then use that to lead into something about ourselves—and our business here—(*SIMON and JOSEPH exit to carpenter shop with their tools, very pleased with themselves at the prospect of their coming prominence.*)

MARY. (*Below table at R. end*) So it's all right now—since everyone believes in him—

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well, that's one thing off your mind. You know how they'll behave. I think I'd have had more respect for them if they'd stuck to their honest opinions, like James. *(She sighs.)*

REBA. *(Off in house)* Mother! Oh, Mother! Will you come here?

MARY. What did I tell you? I said you couldn't trust those girls to cook a lamb if there's any excitement! *(MARY crosses up to MARY CLEOPHAS)* A chicken, yes—but a lamb! I'll have to do it myself. *(As she starts to exit, MARY CLEOPHAS takes her hand.)*

MARY CLEOPHAS. Happy, aren't you?

MARY. I feel that I'm asleep—that I'm dreaming—and I'll suddenly awake and find he isn't coming. Oh, dear! I *am* happy! And I mustn't cry—or my eyes will be a sight—

REBA. *(Off in house)* Mother!

MARY. I'm coming, Reba! *(She hurries into house. JOSEPH comes on from shop—crosses toward house when MARY CLEOPHAS speaks)*

MARY CLEOPHAS. *(As JOSEPH puts on vest—then rolls sleeves down)* Well, Joseph, you just got back from that job in time.

JOSEPH. *(Below house step, putting on vest)* A piece of sheer luck. Simon wanted to come home by way of Choraizon and see Judah and get some first-hand news of him for Mother. But I'd lined up a big job here—*(Adds importantly)*—with the Romans—

(SIMON enters from shop.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. Doing business with the Romans? James will never agree to it!

SIMON. *(Coming from shop)* That's just what I said! After all, it is a big departure.

JOSEPH. (*Angrily*) If James wants to run the shop, let him come and work in it! *You* can do as you like—but when Appius Hadrian comes I'm going through with the deal!

SIMON. (*Anxiously—crossing to JOSEPH*) I'm not opposing you, Joseph. I'm just trying to tell you not to count too much on it until you see what James says.

JOSEPH. (*To MARY CLEOPHAS*) Do something for us, Aunt Mary—try to keep James out of the way while the Roman's here—

MARY CLEOPHAS. He's not coming *today*, is he?

JOSEPH. I can't help it! I made the appointment before I knew anything about Jesus coming home—(*Knock at gate*) If that's *him*, Simon—agree with what I say—(*Goes to gate.*)

(*On knock—SIMON to above R. end table, JOSEPH opens gate.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. That's easy. Simon spends his life agreeing with everybody. (*Rises.*)

(*JOSEPH opens the gate and stands above it, and APPIUS HADRIAN, a rather resplendent Roman, steps in. He raises his right hand in the old Roman salute.*)

APPIUS HADRIAN. Hail, Caesar!

JOSEPH. (*Above gate—clumsily repeating gesture*) Hail, Roman! (*He looks at SIMON, who makes a feeble gesture and mumbles something. Shuts gate; crosses R. of stool after SIMON's salute.*)

(*MARY CLEOPHAS chooses this moment to blow her nose with a trumpet-like sound. HADRIAN starts and looks. MARY CLEOPHAS returns his look coolly and goes into shop.*)

HADRIAN. (*Crosses below table, puts helmet on up stage L. end of table—takes fig from basket*) Well, come to any decision?

JOSEPH. I've been talking it over with my brother here. He's *very* enthusiastic, aren't you, Simon?

SIMON. (*Amiably*) Yes—yes, indeed. (*REBA comes out of house. Crosses down to go upstairs L. HADRIAN watches her from c. Crossing to fig basket*) When you get up here in the hill country you see better legs on the women. (*His hand curves—turns to JOSEPH*) Who's the girl?

(*MARY CLEOPHAS comes out of shop with basket of chips in time to hear this and pauses near SIMON.*)

JOSEPH. (*Half flattered, half annoyed*) My wife.

HADRIAN. Oh! (*Sits under fig tree.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*In hoarse whisper to SIMON*) That's Roman culture for you! *Legs!* (*Crosses and exits into house.*)

HADRIAN. The best figs I've had in Nazareth.

SIMON. My father planted that tree.

JOSEPH. (*Step to table*) We'd be very glad to let you have a basket of them—

HADRIAN. (*Spitting out a stem*) Send them to my house. (*Throughout this scene HADRIAN eats figs and spits out stems.*)

JOSEPH. (*Crosses below table to sit R. end of bench—SIMON above L. end*) Now, about the crosses—there're one or two little points to be cleared up. First, how many would you need?

HADRIAN. Oh, about three a week. That's—(*Spits out another stem.*)

JOSEPH. (*Adding quickly*) A hundred and fifty-six a year.

HADRIAN. Better say a hundred and fifty. Call it

three a week for fifty weeks. (JOSEPH and SIMON exchange pleased glances, then SIMON looks fearfully behind him to see if anyone is coming out of the house) But understand—sound timber, and according to specifications. We had trouble with one contractor last year. A number of his crosses broke in the joins and spoiled the show.

JOSEPH. You won't find that trouble with us. My father was an expert on joins. He always said, "If the join is good, the job is good." (He pauses) And the price?

HADRIAN. I'm figuring in the fees and taxes with the price—

SIMON. More fees? (JOSEPH stops him with a snap of his fingers) We pay so many—

HADRIAN. You'll pay more before long. It takes money to administer the country. To give you a strong government, police, army, navy—costs a pretty penny. (Rises—crosses to SIMON, who rises and backs away) What's fairer than you should pay for what you get? (Sits on table down stage side.)

SIMON. (Backs off to upper R. end of table. Intimidated) Of course. That's right.

JOSEPH. Simon—please don't interrupt!

HADRIAN. (Figures on pad with pencil) Ten percent for my office—ten percent for the Public Works office in Jerusalem—eight percent for the—

NAOMI. (Comes from house and calls up towards rooftop L.) Reba! Reba! Don't stay up there all day! Mother needs you in the kitchen! (Sees SIMON. Voice fades off.)

(SIMON motions NAOMI to be quiet. HADRIAN catches him.)

REBA. (Answering) Coming right down!

(NAOMI exits into house and REBA starts running

downstairs. Waves to JOSEPH as she runs past into the house. HADRIAN has lost track of his figuring—looking after her.)

JOSEPH. We're a little excited today. Our brother's coming home—

SIMON. And he's the best carpenter in the whole country!

HADRIAN. (SIMON leans over his shoulder from above table) Let me see—where was I? Oh, yes—eight percent for the Department of Administration—four percent to the Department of Justice—and twelve percent to the Department of Public Amusements—then the inspectors— (JAMES comes through gate, unnoticed; closes it) and local tithes—makes fifty-four percent—

JOSEPH. (Paces downstage) I tell you I'm going ahead and if James doesn't like it—it's just too bad— (SIMON taps JOSEPH's shoulder to stop him. JOSEPH is suddenly aware that JAMES is listening and turns, seeing him. JOSEPH crosses to JAMES, above him; is very conciliatory in tone) Ah, James, we were just speaking of you. This gentleman is Appius Hadrian. He's making us a very interesting proposition— (HADRIAN nods to JAMES. JAMES ignores JOSEPH, and strides towards HADRIAN to R. of table, L. JOSEPH talking as they go) —one that we can't afford to let slip. Can we, Simon?

SIMON. No, indeed, James. It's—

JAMES. (R. of table—to HADRIAN) We don't do business with foreigners.

HADRIAN. (Stops figuring) This is a Roman province. And wherever the Romans are the other people are the foreigners. (Puts notes away and takes fig.)

JAMES. (Ignoring this) In my elder brother's absence I am the head of the house and I forbid any dealings with the Romans.

JOSEPH. (R. of JAMES) Now, look here, James! I'm not going to have you interfering! It's none of your business how we run the shop!

SIMON. You *are* being unreasonable, James—

JAMES. I will not have this place contaminated.

(HADRIAN *rises—steps back—motions to SIMON, who hands him hat.*)

JOSEPH. You're taking too much on yourself! (To HADRIAN. JOSEPH to c. of bench—HADRIAN crosses R. below him) I hope you won't call the deal off because of my brother's bigotry! (JAMES R. end bench) He's not a carpenter, you know—

HADRIAN. Settle that between yourselves—and when you've finished wrangling let me know. (SIMON crosses to gate; opens it. To JAMES) If Romans did menial work such as carpentry, we wouldn't have come to you. (Bites into fig, crossing to gate. Takes another fig; turns to JOSEPH) Your figs are really excellent. (He exits majestically.)

(SIMON salutes—closes gate.)

JOSEPH. (JOSEPH turns to JAMES—his voice shaking with anger—crosses to JAMES) You've gone too far this time, James! It's all very well for you to be righteous and pull a long face at doing business with the Romans. But Simon and I have families to support. Our wives and children—and you, too, if it comes to that! Simon, call Mother! We'll settle this thing once and for all!

SIMON. (Going toward house) Mother! Mother!

JAMES. She'll agree with me. (Crosses down L. to stairs.)

JOSEPH. We'll see about that.

MARY. (Off in house) What is it?

SIMON. Will you come out here?

MARY. I can't, Simon—I'm busy with my bread. Can't it wait?

JOSEPH. (*To house step*) No. It's something that's got to be settled right now.

MARY. (*Half-humorously*) Oh, dear! All right.

JOSEPH. (*To JAMES*) We've carried the load in this house long enough. And we don't mind—if we're let alone. (*Crosses to above table*) Do we, Simon?

SIMON. (*Hesitantly, to JAMES. JOSEPH slightly above JAMES L.*) I don't think you realize, James, how keen competition is getting.

MARY. (*MARY enters, her hands covered with dough. She surveys them, laughing. Crosses to L. of table*) Just let me get my hands in flour, and that's the signal for everyone in the house to want something! All right—what is it that can't wait? (*She looks from one to the other*) Well, who's going to speak first?

JOSEPH. You see, Mother—the whole thing is so unjust. (*Takes her hands*) You know how long I've been trying to get some really big contract that would carry us over the slow times? I don't want to be a one-horse carpenter all my life!

MARY. (*Smiling a little*) Yes—I know, Joseph. So?

JOSEPH. (*Warming up*) Well—I pull strings and work everyone I know to get in touch with the Roman—

(JAMES up to 3rd and 4th step of stairs L.)

MARY. What Roman?

JAMES. I don't wonder you're surprised! He wants us to have dealings with—

MARY. (*Quietly*) I'll listen to you when your turn comes, James. Joseph is having his say now. Go on, Joseph.

JAMES. I've had my say! (*Stalks off upstairs L.*)

MARY. Poor old James. (*Smiles*) He means well.
(*Turns to SIMON*) What's the trouble now?

SIMON. He wants to run this shop from a seat in the Synagogue!

JOSEPH. (*Crosses L. to foot of stairs—calls after JAMES*) I say, if he wants to run it—let him come and work in it.

MARY. (*L. of table—with gentle humor*) I think you're better off leaving him in the Synagogue. (*She pauses a minute to scrape some dough off her fingers*) I don't know what it is—but there's something about the Pharisee point of view that prevents James from hitting a nail on the head. (*NAOMI comes from house—picks up bowl from fig tree bench. Seeing NAOMI*) Oh, just a minute, Naomi, dear. Get my dough and mixing board, will you? I may as well do it out here. (*NAOMI nods—goes in house. Turns back to JOSEPH*) All right, Joseph.

(*SIMON gets chair for MARY. MARY sits above table. SIMON sits R. of it.*)

JOSEPH. (*Crosses to MARY*) I finally saw him and got him to make us a really wonderful proposition. I talked it over with Simon—who wasn't sure. You know how Simon likes to be on the safe side—

MARY. That'll do, Joseph.

JOSEPH. (*L. of table—leans on it*) Well, anyway—I even got Appius Hadrian to come here himself! And I assure you he doesn't go everywhere—

MARY. (*Puzzled*) Appius Hadrian? Oh—he's the Roman—

JOSEPH. (*Annoyed—steps back*) Now, don't say you haven't heard of him! I never saw such a family! He's the Public Administrator for the District of Nazareth!

MARY. Well, maybe I *have* heard of him—now that you mention it. (NAOMI *brings the bowl and board, puts them on table—exits to house.*) Thank you, dear. (JOSEPH *turns up L. corner of stairs, face to post.* MARY *risks and starts kneading the dough*) Yes—Joseph?

JOSEPH. It's not much use my talking to you if you're going to have your mind on that bread!

MARY. (*Serenely*) If I couldn't do more than one thing at a time, how do you suppose I managed to bring up a large family? Go on—I'm listening.

JOSEPH. (*Turns to her*) Well, I go to all this trouble—have the deal ready to close— (*L. of table again*) and what thanks do I get? Appius Hadrian insulted by that strait-laced old fogey! (*He mimics JAMES*) "We don't do business with foreigners!" And a nice fat contract slips right out of our hands!

MARY. Oh—a contract for what?

JOSEPH and SIMON. (*Together*) For crosses.

MARY. Crosses?

JOSEPH. (*Irritated*) Now, Mother—you know perfectly well what crosses are!

MARY. I'm not deaf, Joseph!

JOSEPH. I'm sorry. (*Sits under fig tree*) But James has me all upset. (*A slight pause*) You know—the crosses the Romans use for executions.

SIMON. They hang criminals on them. (*He extends his arms*) And nail their hands and feet— (*Does it*) like this!

MARY. (*With a little shiver*) Don't, Simon!

SIMON. Well, I'm just telling you.

JOSEPH. Besides—that isn't what James objects to—it isn't the cross—it's the Romans!

MARY. (*Puzzled*) But I can't understand why the making of a few crosses is such a big contract—

JOSEPH. (*Interrupting*) A few? You don't call a hundred and fifty a year a few!

MARY. So *many*!

SIMON. They ship them all over the country. And they don't use the same ones over again. They leave them standing until—

MARY. *Simon! Please!*

JOSEPH. There wouldn't be any profit in it if the crosses were used more than once. (*Eagerly*) So you see what a good thing it is!

MARY. No, I don't! I'm surprised at you, Joseph, wanting anything to do with it.

JOSEPH. But I'm only trying to—

MARY. (*He starts to speak, but she halts him with a gesture*) I'm not blaming you for trying to get ahead—it's your nature to be like that. But I don't believe in killing people—no matter what they've done.

JOSEPH. Only the lowest sort of criminals—

MARY. Even so. What have we to do with a business like that? And today—of all days! Jesus coming home—the whole town making ready to welcome him—and you sit here talking about Roman crosses!

JOSEPH. Every time I—

MARY. (*Cuts him short*) No! I'm not going to discuss it any further. I've got too much to do! Naomi! (*Pats dough into its final shape; resolutely wipes hands on towel.*)

SIMON. (*To JOSEPH, trying to placate him*) But, Joseph, maybe we won't need the contract with Jesus coming home. With the crowds that'll be here, everyone will want new things—

JOSEPH. (*Brightening*) Maybe you're right.

(*NAOMI enters from house.*)

MARY. (*To NAOMI*) Here, dear, take this in and put it in the oven.

DANIEL. (*Before NAOMI can go into the house,*

DANIEL *appears on the top of the wall R. and stands flapping his arms like wings and crowing like a rooster*) Am I proud! (*Crows again*) And don't all the boys envy me!

(MARY *sits above table. DANIEL jumps down, half tumbling, and lands with a clatter.*)

NAOMI. (*Below kitchen step*) How often have I told you not to jump that wall? You'll fall and hurt yourself one day.

(DANIEL *starts across above MARY, who catches him and holds him on her R. He takes off hat—puts it on table.*)

MARY. (*Hugging the boy*) All the boys have jumped that wall—and none of them was ever hurt. So don't worry about Daniel.

DANIEL. You know, lots of the boys have had their fathers or uncles read in the Synagogue. That's nothing! (*To SIMON*) But not one of them was ever invited to preach. Were they? Not even Uncle James, was he? Won't I be important! And if you knew the boys who want to come and play with me after school—so they can drop in when Uncle Jesus is here—(*Pauses to catch his breath. To MARY*) Got anything to eat?

NAOMI. Where are the onions I sent you for?

DANIEL. (*Blankly*) Onions?

NAOMI. Didn't you get them?

DANIEL. I forgot.

NAOMI. Daniel!

SIMON. The boy just hasn't any head—goes around in a daze!

MARY. How can the child be expected to remember anything on a day like this? (*To DANIEL—rises*)

—takes him to gate, gives hat to him) Go and get them now, dear. And if you go by the back door, you might find some cookies—

DANIEL. Thanks, Grandmother. (*Runs out gate. MARY closes gate.*)

(JOSEPH rises, goes into shop, picks up chisel and wood.)

NAOMI. (*Half smiling*) It's a disgrace—the way you spoil him.

MARY. (*R. of SIMON*) Nothing of the sort. Boys need encouragement. They're much shyer than girls. (*JOSEPH and SIMON laugh. MARY turns toward SIMON*) You needn't laugh. That's quite true. (*To NAOMI*) I never had to worry about my girls. They both found good husbands for themselves. Of course, I wish they lived a little closer, but I suppose a man must stay where his business is. (*MARY above SIMON, hands on his shoulder*) But my boys—I'll never forget how the whole family sat up nights with you, Simon, when you were trying to get up courage to propose to Naomi. No, boys need to be helped along. (*SIMON crosses to NAOMI. BOTH go off to house. A woman's VOICE is heard outside and MARY with linens starts hurriedly towards house. JOSEPH comes from shop to gate. KNOCK is heard.*) Oh, dear—if people keep coming I'll never get anything done! Let me get in the house before—

(*The gate is flung open by JOSEPH and ANNA, another neighbor—a smaller, younger woman than HEPZIBAH—appears with EBEN, the peddler, in tow. MARY CLEOPHAS enters from house when EBEN enters. JOSEPH exits, closing gate.*)

ANNA. Oh, Mary— Come on, young man. Don't

let your feet stick to the ground! I want my friend to see these things before they go out of fashion!

MARY. Well, Anna—this is a surprise!

EBEN. (*To R. of table*) Here are all the latest styles. Why go to Jerusalem, when I bring Jerusalem to you? (*Puts pack on table. Laughs at his own wit, dumps his pack and starts to display his wares.*)

ANNA. (*Effusively to MARY*) He's got the loveliest things! You ought to see the new dress I bought! I don't know what my husband will say—my spending so much—but an occasion like this doesn't happen every day. (*Starts for gate—turns back*) What are you going to wear?

MARY. (*L. of table with tablecloths*) When?

ANNA. *When?* Why, Sunday when he preaches! Everyone'll be there!

MARY. Why, I don't know. I hadn't thought. I haven't anything new—

ANNA. (*To EBEN*) See—I brought you to the right place! (*To MARY*) I've got to run along but make him show you his whole line of goods.

MARY. (*A little embarrassed*) Thank you, Anna. Goodbye!

ANNA. (*Out gate—shuts gate*) Goodbye!

MARY. I'll be glad to look—though I haven't much time.

EBEN. This is your chance to get the smartest things at half the cost in your local shops. Everything new, everything fresh.

MARY CLEOPHAS. You've got a pretty expensive line of goods, there, young man.

EBEN. Now look at this scarf. Sunset, I call it. "Oh! gracious sun which will appear again tomorrow in brighter colors!"

MARY. (*To MARY CLEOPHAS*) Do you think it would be very extravagant if I bought a new shawl? Just to throw around the shoulders—

EBEN. Just a minute, lady.

MARY. (*Puts linens on table*) Not too expensive.

(EBEN takes out striped scarf.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. Oh, that's pretty!

EBEN. (*MARY moves to below bench*) Pretty! It was a sensation at the circus last Fall. The lady who wore it rode on a zebra. (*Puts it down.*)

MARY. It's a little conspicuous— (*Meanwhile EBEN brings out a blue scarf.*) Oh, that's the prettiest of all! (*MARY crosses below table*) Blue! His favorite color! How much is that one?

EBEN. Ten pieces of silver.

MARY. It's lovely—but I can't afford it.

EBEN. If I was the mother of your son, there's nothing I couldn't afford.

MARY. You know my son!

EBEN. Know him? (*Crosses below R. end bench*) I'd be starving to death if it wasn't for him.

MARY. He helped you? Tell me about him.

(*WARN Curtain.*)

EBEN. (*R. of MARY*) When I say he helped me—I mean—well, wherever he goes there's crowds—and where there's crowds there's money. Sometimes I get so interested in what he says that I almost forget to sell my goods! He certainly knows how to hold people—right in the palm of his hand. (*Adds sheepishly*) You know, I listen to him and I think to myself—I won't drive such a sharp bargain next time—think of the other fellow, like he says. Then I get away and get mixed up in a business deal—and, well, I guess I forget all about it. You know how it is. (*Then with a burst of generosity*) Look, since you're his mother—I'll make you special prices. The blue scarf—nine pieces of silver. Sunset, seven pieces—

MARY. I'll take it. The blue one. (*EBEN hands it to her. To MARY CLEOPHAS*) Oh, dear—maybe I shouldn't! But I do want to look my best. (*Throws*

shawl around her shoulders) Do you think he'll like it? *(She turns around for MARY CLEOPHAS to get the full effect, her back to the gate. Suddenly JOSEPH bursts in gate.)*

JOSEPH. He's here! He's here!

(MARY turns around so swiftly that the shawl slips unheeded from her shoulders. MARY CLEOPHAS holds it.)

MARY. Where? Where is he?

JOSEPH. Coming up the road!

DANIEL. *(Climbs wall and jumps down—runs into house, returns to step with NAOMI and SIMON)* He's here! Mother! Father! Uncle Joseph! He's here!

(JOSEPH—into kitchen, then out and up L. of step: REBA enters and stands with him. MARY goes to the open gate—stands for one moment, looking. Then her arms fly out as she runs out into the road. The Curtain starts down. EBEN kneels, doing up his pack, and MARY CLEOPHAS picks up the forgotten shawl and starts out after MARY.)

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE II

A house in Nazareth—one week later.

At rise of Curtain the stage is absolutely empty. There is no sign of life either in the courtyard or from the house. After a moment there is a KNOCKING at the gate, but no one answers. The large table is against wall between house

and shop. A chair is Center. The long bench is off. Stool against wall just below gate. The KNOCKING is repeated and after another moment's silence, the gate opens cautiously, disclosing HEPZIBAH. HEPZIBAH steps into the courtyard and takes a quick appraising look around. Stool R.C. ANNA looks over wall above gate.

HEPZIBAH. Empty as a grave! (*Sees ANNA*) Hello, Anna!

ANNA. Hepzibah— (*Enters gate.*)

HEPZIBAH. Come on in.

ANNA. (*Hesitating, yet eager, in gate*) Do you think we should?

HEPZIBAH. (*R. above stool*) They ought to be glad anyone comes to see them—after last Sunday. *That was a frost!*

ANNA. It certainly fell flat. (*Closing gate*) It was good for the cake and sweet sellers, though. The crowd bought a lot. (*Looks around curiously.*)

HEPZIBAH. Even more than if he'd really performed the miracles. They got so tired of waiting for things to happen they ate everything in sight. (*Goes towards shop. ANNA crosses above chair*) Well, if you ask me, I was glad to see this family put in its place. (*Crossing to shop*) The airs they put on when they heard he was coming.

ANNA. Not James.

HEPZIBAH. No, I'll say that for James. He was never taken in by Jesus. (*In doorway of shop—with satisfaction, looking in shop. ANNA steps to look*) Look, Anna—not a piece of work in the shop! And all that new lumber they bought—just stacked up— (*Makes clicking sound of commiseration.*)

ANNA. (*Crosses down L., looking up L. stairs*) Someone might come in—

HEPZIBAH. (*With a shrug*) We're just being neighborly.

DANIEL. (*DANIEL comes out of house—stops short. Half closes door*) Oh, I didn't know you were here—

ANNA. (*Embarrassed*) Is anyone home?

DANIEL. Mother and Aunt Reba have gone to the country, but Grandmother's home. Shall I call her?

HEPZIBAH. (*Crosses L. to pat DANIEL's hair—he pulls away*) Yes. We'd like to see her. (*DANIEL exits into house—closes door. To ANNA, crosses down L.—in a lower voice*) Anyone seen Mary since Sunday? (*BOTH front of fig tree.*)

ANNA. (*Shakes head "no"*) I think she took it pretty hard. She'd bought a new shawl. I talked to her the day he was coming home—and my, was she excited!

HEPZIBAH. I know. I loaned her my dishes.

ANNA. Your *best* dishes?

HEPZIBAH. Not my best—but better than Mary has. The fuss that went on here in this house—you'd think no other mother in Nazareth ever had a son!

(*MARY comes out of house, closes door, carrying HEPZIBAH's dishes. She is pale and making an effort to be composed, and braces herself for the taunts she knows are coming. ANNA nudges HEPZIBAH, who does not turn until MARY speaks.*)

MARY. (*R. of HEPZIBAH and ANNA, hears end of speech*) I'm sorry I'm so late returning your dishes—I meant to do it before—

HEPZIBAH. (*Takes dishes*) It's natural you should forget—with all your other troubles—I mean—so much to do, straightening things after—

MARY. Yes—I've been quite busy—getting the house tidied up—I sent the girls away for a little

rest—they've taken Esther with them. And then Judah came home late last night—

HEPZIBAH. (*Surprised, looks at ANNA*) I thought he was staying away another month?

MARY. No, he left his job and hurried home hoping to see his— (*Breaks off.*)

ANNA. (*Covering her slip—below HEPZIBAH*) —to see Miriam? I suppose they'll be getting married before long—

MARY. Yes. It's all settled—I'm working on his things now. (*Above to R. of chair c.—indicates sewing on chair.*)

(*DANIEL enters from house with boat—crosses to wall, gets on stool and climbs up.*)

ANNA. (*With relief in her voice*) Oh, well—with a good match like that, people are bound to look up to you again— (*Breaks off, embarrassed*) Oh— (*Crosses to L. of chair c.*) I'm sorry, Mary. I didn't mean to say that. Jesus might do better another time. We all have our off days. Ezra, the singer, tells me that sometimes he can't get a full note.

HEPZIBAH. But he doesn't blame it on other people's lack of hearing! I don't like to hurt your feelings, Mary—but I'm not one to hold back anything. And I must say you always spoiled him. Made him think he was something special—

ANNA. It's not easy to bring up a lot of boys without a man in the family. (*To MARY—not unkindly*) You know, Mary—Jesus really ought to have known better than to come back here where everyone knows him. (*JOSEPH enters stairs L.; stands on landing until he speaks. When ANNA crosses, HEPZIBAH puts dishes on fig tree bench and crosses down L.*) When a man's hammered on your cupboard doors and mended your roofs, you're not going to believe he's turned into a prophet over night.

(DANIEL is walking up and down wall—arms out-stretched. Down stage for HEPZIBAH'S speech.)

HEPZIBAH. (*With malice*) Well, Daniel—trying to do tricks like your Uncle Jesus? (*Crosses below MARY to DANIEL*) If you like magic, there's a wonderful fakir in town this morning—an Egyptian. You ought to see him! (*ANNA backs L. toward fig tree—turns and stops L.*) Makes flowers grow in a barren pot—tears a scarf in two and makes it all one piece again—

DANIEL. (*Balancing as he speaks*) Oh, Grandmother—couldn't we see him?

MARY. (*Terribly moved*) No, Daniel—

JOSEPH. (*Coming down stairs L. Closing door. Crosses toward shop*) Get down, Daniel! How often do we have to tell you to keep off that wall! (*DANIEL jumps off wall. To MARY*) The boy'll break his neck one day. (*Pretends to see WOMEN*) Oh—hello, Anna—Hepzibah—I didn't see you. (*Yawns and stretches*) I'm late getting down this morning— (*To ANNA*) We worked till after midnight getting a rush order through. (*Between MARY and ANNA.*)

HEPZIBAH. (*To up R. above and between MARY and post*) Busy, eh?

JOSEPH. (*To ANNA, R. of her*) That isn't the word! It's been a grind. (*Crosses to L. above MARY*) Did those new pegs come yet, Mother?

MARY. (*Blankly*) New pegs?

HEPZIBAH. Well, I don't know where I got the idea but I thought things were kind of slack—

JOSEPH. Slack? That's good! (*To MARY*) The way we kept you awake pounding half the night! (*Crossing into shop.*)

MARY. (*Playing up—painfully—above chair*) I'd—I'd better call Simon, hadn't I? If you're going to get busy at—at that job—

JOSEPH. (*Meanwhile picks up hammer and starts pounding. From shop*) Yes—tell him we haven't much time—

MARY. (*To WOMEN—starts toward house*) Yes—(*Is eager to get away but DANIEL defeats her purpose.*)

DANIEL. (*Starts to house*) I'll go, Grandmother. (*Starts into house. Half closes door—calling:*) Father! Father! Uncle Joseph wants you! (*Exits.*)

(*JOSEPH hammers and whistles with a great pretense of busyness. HEPZIBAH smiles a little scornfully while MARY clasps her hands tightly together in acute misery.*)

ANNA. (*Embarrassed—crosses to gate—opens it. HEPZIBAH starts to follow*) We'd better be going—

MARY. (*c. of house door*) Yes—I'm afraid we're all a little late getting our work done this morning!

ANNA and HEPZIBAH. (*Together*) Goodbye—(*Start to exit, leaving the dishes.*)

MARY. Oh, Hepzibah— (*MARY picks up dishes*) You forgot your dishes—

HEPZIBAH. (*Crosses to her—takes dishes from MARY—ANNA stays at gate*) Oh, yes—

MARY. And thank you. (*BOTH exit. HEPZIBAH closes gate. There is a pause, broken only by JOSEPH'S hammering. MARY goes a little limp below chair*) You can stop now, Joseph.

JOSEPH. (*Coming out*) You see, Mother—that's what we have to put up with all over town! (*Swings hammer.*)

SIMON. (*Rushing out from house—closes door*) Well, here I am, Joseph— (*Sees hammer*) Oh, got a job, have we? That's good! Who's it for?

JOSEPH. There isn't any job.

SIMON. Well, then why—

(MARY picks up sewing and basket—crosses to sit L. end fig tree bench.)

JOSEPH. Just a little show for the neighbors. Anna and Hepzibah were here.

SIMON. (*Crestfallen*) Oh—I see. I thought for a moment— (*Breaks off.*)

JOSEPH. (*Swinging hammer*) Feels nice—having a hammer in your hand.

SIMON. I'd do a job for nothing—I'm so sick of sitting around. (*Sits R. of MARY.*)

JOSEPH. Well, you can thank your precious brother for this. (*Throws hammer in shop.*)

SIMON. If he only hadn't come back!

MARY. (*Trying to control herself*) You were all pretty excited when we heard he was coming home—You were as pleased as anyone, Joseph.

JOSEPH. Of course I was! I thought he'd go over here the way he did other places. If he had— (*Sighs*) Well, I guess it's easy to fool strangers. (*Turns C. chair—sits on it facing downstage.*)

SIMON. He might have thought of what this would do to us before coming back. Having your brother run out of town—

JOSEPH. (*With a shiver*) I'll never forget the way they rose up against him in the Synagogue and drove him out to the edge of that cliff! They'd have pushed him over, too, if he hadn't got away.

(MARY stops sewing.)

SIMON. (*Lowering voice*) Joseph, how do you suppose he did it? There was a lot of talk about his—well—just vanishing—

JOSEPH. His disciples slipped him away. (*Indignant anew*) And there's another thing! That crowd he got together for disciples. He couldn't pick peo-

ple that might do him some good! A lot of ignorant fishermen! He'll never get anywhere with *them*!

MARY. (*Sewing again*) Please, Joseph— Do we have to have that all over again!

(MARY CLEOPHAS comes out of the house. MARY looks up with relief at the interruption.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*In door*) Judah up yet?

MARY. (*Her face brightening*) He's having a good sleep. (*Looks up towards roof*) Poor boy—he needs it after that long trip. (*Pause*) My, but I'm glad to have him home again.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crosses L.*) I should think you would be. (JAMES enters at head of stairs L.—closes door) At least he looks cheerful—which is more than I can say for some of the faces around here. Oh, hello, James— (*Sits below MARY—bench L.*)

JOSEPH. I suppose we've got a lot to be cheerful about!

MARY. (*With tremendous effort*) I—I think you're making all this even worse than it needs to be. These things blow over—

JOSEPH. That's easy to say.

MARY. Well, they do. People will talk about this—because it's the last thing that happened. And they'll keep talking until something else comes along. It's always like that in a small town.

SIMON. (*Slowly*) It seems pretty unfair—

JAMES. (*On 2nd and 3rd step*) Just a minute, Simon— If Jesus had been a great success here—it would have helped you, wouldn't it?

JOSEPH. Of course.

JAMES. Well, that would have been unfair, too. I mean—you wouldn't have really earned it—but you would have taken it. I think you should accept it when it turns out this way, too.

JOSEPH. Come on, Simon, I'm going to the store—

(Crossing below chair to gate. SIMON rises and follows. To MARY) Don't wait lunch for us.

DANIEL. *(Entering from house)* Can I come, too?

(JOSEPH exits.)

SIMON. I suppose so.

(DANIEL runs out, pushing past SIMON.)

MARY. *(Rises—crosses down r.)* Simon?

SIMON. *(Stops—turns to her—BOTH below chair)*
Yes, Mother.

MARY. Try to get Joseph into a good humor. I want things pleasant for Judah—his first day home.

SIMON. I'll try.

MARY. That's a good boy. *(SIMON exits—closes gate. JAMES crosses to house step. MARY turns to him, r. of chair)* And James—it—it was nice of you to speak up—

JAMES. *(Below l. of step—clumsily)* Right is right. *(He exits to house; closes door. There is a moment's silence.)*

MARY CLEOPHAS. I sometimes wonder how Jesus would feel if, all the time he's preaching peace and brotherly love, he knew the wrangling that's gone on in this house ever since he left.

MARY. Oh, Mary Cleophas, I don't know—it's so difficult! *(Pause—crosses above chair)* I've always encouraged Jesus and stood up for him but lately I've wondered if I was doing right—if I was doing my duty to my other children. *(Crosses to sit fig tree bench)* After all, they've got their lives to live, they're entitled to their share of happiness. Goodness knows what they ask is harmless enough! Just work to support their families!

MARY CLEOPHAS. Yes—and the way things are—

I suppose you can't blame them for taking it pretty hard.

MARY. People weren't in the right frame of mind for him to come back just now. No one here had any real faith in him. But their local pride was stirred up. Then when he came—and you know how simple he is—and he went around without making himself important—just living here as he'd always done—well, they just couldn't accept him—that's all.

MARY CLEOPHAS. I suppose they expected to see him wearing a gold crown.

MARY. Something like that.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Still, you've always treated him as though he were different from the others.

MARY. He *is* different. Even before he was born I knew he was different. I— (*Breaks off. Rises—crosses R. Pause*) You know, I'm glad Judah didn't get home in time, after all. He loves his brother so—it would have hurt him to see how he was treated here. Well, his life is going to be happy—Miriam is a lovely girl— (*Crossing to MARY CLEOPHAS, sits on tree bench*) Oh, I knew there was something I wanted to ask you—with the wedding coming on—I was wondering if you could lend me a little money!

MARY CLEOPHAS. Of course! How much do you need?

DANIEL. (*DANIEL coming in over wall crosses up L. above chair*) Grandmother—the Rabbi and Mendel are coming to see you—I passed them on the road—

MARY. (*Rising abruptly*) The Rabbi! And Judah not up yet! (*Smooths her hair and dress, turns to MARY CLEOPHAS*) Am I all right?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises and nods—crosses to gate*) Yes, I'll open the gate.

MARY. I half expected Mendel, but not the Rabbi. I thought he was still away. (*MARY CLEOPHAS opens the gate and RABBI and MENDEL come in. BOTH look*

ill-at-ease. MARY, *smiling, but nervous underneath*) Oh, Rabbi Samuel—I'm so glad to see you! (*Shakes hands with RABBI—nods to MENDEL*) And you, too, Mendel.

(MARY CLEOPHAS *closes gate—stands down R.*)

RABBI. Thank you, Mary. (*There is an awkward pause.*)

MARY. (*Crosses down L. toward stairs*) My Judah isn't up yet. He came home late last night—I'm making him take a good sleep. But I'll call him now—(*Half turns to stairs.*)

MENDEL. (*R. of RABBI*) No, Mary. (*MARY stops*) The Rabbi wants to talk to you alone. (*Looks at MARY CLEOPHAS.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. I'll go inside. (*Above chair R.*) How's business, Mendel?

(MARY *moves sewing to extreme L. corner of fig tree bench.*)

MENDEL. Not bad.

MARY CLEOPHAS. A marriage broker certainly has the edge on all the other trades.

MENDEL. How's that?

MARY CLEOPHAS. He's got Nature for a partner! (*RABBI crosses to below fig tree bench*) Come along, Daniel. (*DANIEL and MARY CLEOPHAS exit into house.*)

MARY. Can't I offer you some refreshments?

MENDEL. Well—

RABBI. I don't think so. } (*Together*)

MARY. (*Crosses to L. of c. chair*) A little glass of wine?

(MENDEL *fixes chair for MARY.*)

RABBI. (*Sits on tree bench*) What we've come to say isn't very pleasant, Mary. The quicker we get to it the better. (*Removes hat—puts it L. of him. MARY sits chair. Pauses, then turns to MENDEL*) Mendel, shall I go on?

MENDEL. (*Relieved—crosses L. between and above them*) Glad to have you.

RABBI. Aaron has called off the marriage between Judah and Miriam.

MARY. Called it off!

RABBI. Yes.

MARY. But *why*?

MENDEL. I hate to say this, Mary—and the words are my client's—not mine.

MARY. Go on.

MENDEL. (*Reluctantly*) Your family is getting a bad reputation.

(*A long pause.*)

RABBI. (*Barely audible*) Because of Jesus!

MARY. Oh, but that's so unfair! Why should the boy suffer for his brother?

MENDEL. That's just what we said to Aaron.

MARY. What did he say?

MENDEL. That things like this run in families. You can't tell where they'll break out next.

MARY. (*Indignantly*) And we're supposed to sit here and do nothing—well, I won't! (*Rises—crosses almost to gate*) I'll go to Aaron myself.

RABBI. It's no use, Mary. (*MARY stops*) He's closed his shop and taken his family away.

MARY. (*At gate—a little bitterly*) Didn't even give us a chance to defend ourselves.

(*The RABBI and MENDEL exchange a look. MENDEL signals the RABBI to speak.*)

RABBI. He did make one condition, Mary. Grudgingly—but he made it.

MARY. (*Hopefully—crosses toward RABBI—to L. of chair*) You mean—he might change his mind? What is it?

RABBI. It's something *you* must do.

MARY. (*Eagerly*) But I'll do anything! You know I will. Only tell me what it is!

RABBI. You must never receive Jesus here in this house again.

MARY. (*Incredulous*) No—

MENDEL. That's what Aaron says—

RABBI. Disown him. Cast him off. Forget that he ever existed.

MARY. Oh—

RABBI. It's a hard choice, Mary. But it's your responsibility. You're the one who must decide.

(MARY *sits on chair*. MENDEL *does not speak till she is down*. Pause.)

MENDEL. You know this business about Jesus upset Aaron from the very beginning. He always said—"If he's a miracle worker—I'm a Roman Emperor!" I tried to tell him—Judah's a fine young man. Nothing like his brother. (*Crosses to sit L. bench*) A little hot-tempered perhaps, like all Nazarenes—but marriage will settle him down. I got him partly satisfied—then Jesus came back here with all that to-do about him, and was a failure— That finished Aaron!

RABBI. Well, Mary—?

MARY. (*After a pause*) My house will be open to Jesus as long as I live.

RABBI. It seems pretty hard for Judah to pay for his brother's mistakes. You said so yourself, Mary.

MARY. (*After a pause*) I can't understand it!

Why did they all turn against him? What is he teaching that could possibly do anyone any harm?

RABBI. He excites the people. Puts a lot of new ideas in their heads. Starts them thinking. You see, Mary—it's so easy to get off on the wrong foot. Mind you, *I've* no objection to his teaching, even though he isn't a Rabbi. After all that only means "teacher." I think he's honest and sincere. But very indiscreet. And when people criticize him, see what he says—"Don't judge people if you don't want to be judged yourself."

MENDEL. But then he goes on to make it worse with a deliberate dig at the Pharisees—and you know how touchy they are—calling them names, insulting them. Tells them they're full of hypocrisy and corruption.

RABBI. Word about him has got to Jerusalem and right now, when things are so unsettled, it's a bad time to talk about the equality of man and the oppression of the poor. But that's the history of all reformers. They go too far. I don't want to worry you, Mary, but you mustn't close your eyes and your ears to the danger he's in.

MARY. (*Rises—crosses R.*) That's all I've heard since the day he left home to preach! Everyone predicting he'd come to a bad end. And every day more and more people believe in him. (*Up R.C.*) Oh, what I've learned about human nature from this town! All my old friends hardly able to wait until they get inside the gate to tell me some scandalous story about him! No wonder he was a failure here! And you—who invited him—you were always a fair man, but now you've put yourself on the side of the Pharisees who hate Jesus because they see their power and their influence slipping away from them—because word of Jesus and his work is spreading all over the country. That it's even reached Jerusalem. And it'll

go on! People like you can't stop him! No one can stop him!

RABBI. (*Furious—rises—MENDEL rises*) I came here as a friend—trying to spare your feelings—I didn't come here to be insulted! (*Hat on. To MARY—L.C. of her*) But now, I'll tell you something! If someone doesn't get hold of your son and stop him—he'll end up like his cousin John with his head on a harlot's platter. He's got the Temple and the government so stirred up against him—why, I wouldn't give you *that*—(*Snaps his fingers*)—for his safety! Not that! (*Snaps his fingers again.*)

(*There is a dead silence as the RABBI breaks off, breathless. MARY walks over to the gate and opens it and stands there.*)

MARY. (*Almost in a whisper*) I don't like to ask a Rabbi to leave my house—but I can't have you talking like that about my son. The streets are free—you can say what you like in them. But this is his home. (*Her voice breaks a little. RABBI looks at MENDEL—motions him to go. After his exit RABBI crosses to L. of MARY. The RABBI pauses. He is profoundly moved and we must feel that he realizes her outburst was maternal, and not directed at him personally.*)

RABBI. (*Touches MARY lightly*) I'm sorry, Mary. I lost my temper. (*Pause*) All I know is—if he were my son—I'd be worried. (*He exits after MENDEL, leaving MARY shaken by these last words.*)

(*MARY is left alone; closes gate and slowly crosses to fig tree bench—picks up sewing. JUDAH enters when she takes sewing and sits under fig tree. JUDAH comes from upstairs L. and clatters happily down, talking as he comes. MARY turns, like one stricken. In her defense of Jesus she has forgotten all about JUDAH.*)

JUDAH. Mother! Why did you let me sleep so late? Half the day's gone and I haven't seen Miriam! (*He is at the foot of the steps by the time he finishes and crosses towards the gate.*)

MARY. (*Sharply*) Don't go now! (*JUDAH halts*) I mean—I want a little visit with you myself. (*With an heroic effort at self-control*) Come and sit down by me—there's a good boy—

JUDAH. (*Hesitating—almost at gate*) I did want to see her—

MARY. After a while.

JUDAH. (*Crosses to above chair c.*) You know how late it was when I got home last night? (*MARY nods*) I went the long way round so that I'd pass her house. It was all dark—but I knew where her window was—and I just stood there and looked and imagined her lying asleep with all her hair loose on the pillow—(*A pause*) Mother?

MARY. Yes, dear—

JUDAH. Now that it's so close I'm—I'm a little nervous about getting married—(*Crosses to her*) I mean—Miriam's so young—(*Sits on bench r. of MARY*) been so sheltered—and I don't know very much.

MARY. (*Choked—puts sewing down L. of her*) Oh, my dear!

JUDAH. I want to be a good husband—and I don't know how. I mean—I don't know all the things that make a happy marriage. I can't go to Simon or Joseph. They'd laugh at me.

(*There is a pause while MARY struggles to speak.*)

MARY. Do you love her so very much, Judah?

JUDAH. Why, Mother!

MARY. I mean—you're young—there are lots of other girls—

JUDAH. Other girls! I've been going to marry Miriam ever since I can remember!

MARY. Aaron is such a difficult man—always causing trouble—

JUDAH. Well, I'm not going to marry *Aaron*! And that reminds me, Mother. I wanted to tell you—Miriam and I decided a long time ago that we'd like to come here and make our home—that is, if you'll have us—

MARY. (*Rising—holds JUDAH's head against her. Then stands*) Judah, the Rabbi and Mendel were just here. They brought bad news.

JUDAH. What's happened? Is Miriam sick? (*Rises*) What is it, Mother?

MARY. Aaron has called off the marriage!

JUDAH. But he can't do that! It's all settled—

MARY. Aaron's pretty influential. It isn't easy to go against him—once he's roused. Mendel and the Rabbi did their best—

JUDAH. (*Only half listening*) But what have I done?

MARY. You haven't done *anything*! (*Searching desperately for reasons*) It's just that—Aaron's ambitious and—and we aren't exactly what you'd call a prominent family— (*She breaks off. JUDAH makes move away L.*) There's nothing we can do, Judah. He's taken Miriam away.

JUDAH. (*Turns to her*) But there must be a *reason*, Mother— (*Crosses to MARY*) What is it? He must have said something. Mendel and the Rabbi wouldn't come here on just nothing! They wouldn't dare!

MARY. (*MARY realizes that she can't evade the truth any longer. She faces JUDAH with as much courage as she can muster*) I don't know how to tell you! (*Puts her hands on his shoulders*) The only one of my children who never gave me a moment's wor-

ry! (*Pause*) Judah—he won't let you marry her—because of your brother—

JUDAH. My brother?

MARY. Because of—Jesus.

(*There is a silence while JUDAH stares at her.*)

JUDAH. You mean they've called off my wedding because of Jesus? (*He pulls away—MARY holds him.*) (*WARN Curtain.*)

MARY. Yes. (*She puts her arms around him*) Oh, Judah—I don't know what to say to you—I know how hard this is on you! It's hard on me, too!

JUDAH. (*JUDAH shakes her off, turns L. away from her, half mad with grief and resentment. He is young enough to be nearly in tears*) It's easy to talk! But I'm young! And my life's going to be ruined just because I've got a brother with crazy ideas!

MARY. Judah! Oh, I know how hurt and upset you are, dear—but try to remember how fond you were of each other! Why, Jesus was your favorite brother! He used to carry you around—

JUDAH. I don't care what he was! He's ruined my life! (*Turns toward MARY. Pause. A step toward her*) Wasn't there anything you could do—

MARY. Aaron did make one condition—

JUDAH. (*Crosses to her*) Why didn't you tell me? What was it?

MARY. It was something impossible.

JUDAH. (*Impatiently*) What was it?

MARY. (*Slowly*) He wanted us to disown Jesus—
forbid him the house—

JUDAH. Well, why didn't you do it!

MARY. Judah!

JUDAH. (*Rushing on—crosses down to c., R. of MARY—then faces her*) What does he care about us! He goes his own sweet way—running around the

country doing as he pleases! (*Stops c.*) Why should we worry about him?

MARY. Judah—don't!

JUDAH. I hate him! I hate him! I wish he were dead! (*He brushes past MARY, flings open the gate and goes out into the road. The gate closes sharply behind him. MARY stands alone on the stage—*

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE I

A street in Jerusalem. Night.

A small square in a poor district. Up Left Center, on ramp, is a wide-ledged fountain with running water. There are three entrances. One at Left, another at Rear Center, and a third at Right. They are all arched and the streets presumably go through the low buildings that frame the three sides of the square.

Houses and shops are shuttered against the night. Candles glow in windows here and there.

AT RISE: *GIRL is filling pitcher at pump. WOMAN stands waiting her turn. MARY CLEOPHAS is discovered sitting on the ramp. She has taken her sandals off and is rubbing one of her feet, talking as she does, to WOMAN.*

MARY CLEOPHAS. *(Sitting L. of well—on ramp)* I'm a stranger here. My sister and I came to see my nephew. They're supposed to be having supper somewhere around here. My sister's trying to find the place. *(GIRL goes off C. to R. MARY CLEOPHAS looking around)* I don't know as I'd care to live in a big city.

WOMAN. *(Filling pitcher R. of well)* It's not very neighborly. And no place for the children to play but

in the street. I'm always after my husband to move out into the country—at least, as far as Bethany.

MARY CLEOPHAS. We were there today. Some friends of my nephew's—it's a pretty little place.

WOMAN. Yes, it is. But this is nearer his work—and you know how men are. (*Finishes pumping and holds cup to get drink.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. I don't suppose you know my nephew, do you? This is a big place—but he's quite a figure—from what they tell me—

WOMAN. (*Pausing*) What's his name?

MARY CLEOPHAS. Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth.

WOMAN. (*Her attitude changes*) That man!

MARY CLEOPHAS. Then you do know him?

WOMAN. (*Turns down R.*) Don't insult me! I wouldn't have anything to do with him!

MARY CLEOPHAS. But I thought he created such a stir here last week—rode through the city—

WOMAN. (*Turns to MARY CLEOPHAS*) Broke the Sabbath to do it!

MARY CLEOPHAS. But the people waved palms and cheered. I heard they made a real demonstration.

WOMAN. A lot of idlers and roustabouts! I haven't any use for him! (*Turns*) Stirring people up—turning families against each other! Telling them what to do and what to say! Who does he think he is?

MARY CLEOPHAS. Did you ever see him?

WOMAN. I don't have to! I've heard enough about him. (*Drinks.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. I've known him since he was a little boy. I don't agree with everything he says. But he's a good and honest man.

(*The ROMAN SOLDIER'S WHISTLE is heard off.*)

WOMAN. (*Crosses to pump*) You wouldn't say that if you knew what he did here last week. Drove the money changers out of the Temple with a whip

—where they'd been ever since anyone can remember. That was a fine thing to do, with old Annas getting a percentage on all the money that changes hands. And as if that wasn't enough—he told them they could tear down the Temple—tear it down, mind you—and he'd rebuild it in three days.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Startled*) He didn't say that?

WOMAN. (*With satisfaction*) That and worse! He called himself the Son of God! (*CHILD enters R. whistling—kicking stone—crosses up C. and off L.*) A blasphemer! (*Long pause*) I maybe shouldn't have said so much—with you his relative—

MARY CLEOPHAS. Speech is free. I'm not one to stop anyone from speaking their minds. But I'm glad his mother didn't hear you. He's the apple of her eye. (*WOMAN puts cup on top of pump and picks up water jar*) Besides, I've heard these things before and nothing ever came of it. (*Puts shoes on.*)

(*The ROMAN SOLDIER'S WHISTLE is repeated off.*)

WOMAN. (*R. of pump*) He's going too far now. Even though they're used to fanatics here.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Fanatic! So that's what they call him.

WOMAN. And the class of people he has for followers! That red-headed dancer from Magdala—at least that was *one* of her professions—

MARY CLEOPHAS. I've heard of *her*.

WOMAN. (*Acidly*) She makes a show of herself! Breaking alabaster jars of perfume over his feet and bathing them with it and wiping them off with her hair!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Reluctantly*) It does sound kind of pagan.

WOMAN. (*Steps toward MARY CLEOPHAS*) They tell me that back in Magdala she had more servants

than she could count. Gold plates to eat off and silk sheets to sleep under.

MARY CLEOPHAS. You don't say! (*Breaks off and rises as she sees MARY coming R.*) Oh, here's my sister now. Well—it's been nice having this little talk. Good night.

WOMAN. Good night. (*She eyes MARY curiously as she exits below* MARY CLEOPHAS L.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*To MARY*) Did you find it? (*BOTH below pump.*)

MARY. (*Wearily*) No. And I looked at all the two-storied houses.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Two-storied?

MARY. Don't you remember—Selima said they were having supper in an upper room.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Oh, yes.

MARY. But there wasn't a sign of them. Then I had to turn back. There were soldiers pouring into the square.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Soldiers?

MARY. Roman soldiers. A lot of them. (*The WHISTLE is repeated off*) That's their signal again. They were being gathered from all over the city. It—it made me uneasy.

(*MAN enters C.—looks R.—steps on—looking L.—then looks R. again. Closes shutter on window R., then goes off R.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. There's always something going on in Jerusalem. Especially at this season. (*LIGHT in L. upstairs grille window is extinguished*) You shouldn't have come here, Mary. You should be home where you belong with your family.

MARY. You've been wonderful. Stood by me when all the others turned against me.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well, I'm not sure it was good sense.

MARY. You don't suppose those soldiers have anything to do with—with—

MARY CLEOPHAS. Now, Mary, I know how important Jesus is to you—but they're scarcely calling out the Roman army for him! Now, sit down and rest. (*Sits L. end of pump*) Oh, those cobblestones!

MARY. (*Down R.*) If we only knew which house it was! And it's getting so late.

MARY CLEOPHAS. That woman Selima certainly got us on the wrong track! If we hadn't gone to her—

MARY. But it was *her* sons who made the arrangements for the supper—

MARY CLEOPHAS. The way she trails them around the country! Her James and her John! I should think it would drive them crazy. And what was that business about who'd sit where?

MARY. I didn't quite understand. Something about wanting to know when Jesus became king—if he'd promise seats on each side of the throne to her sons. (*Suddenly serious*) All this talk of thrones and kingdoms—he never cared for things like that— (*Breaks off*) I can't get those soldiers out of my mind!

MARY CLEOPHAS. If there had been anything really wrong—wouldn't they have told us at Bethany? Surely they'd be the ones to know—with him sleeping there every night!

MARY. You know, it's been years since I was in Jerusalem. But I don't remember it's ever being so—so unfriendly.

MARY CLEOPHAS. That's because you're tired.

(*Center window LIGHT upstairs is extinguished.*)

MARY. No. It's something else. Everything is so still—and yet it isn't peaceful. As if something were waiting—the way it is before a thunder storm. You know, I thought once I got to Jerusalem I'd feel bet-

ter knowing he was so close. But I don't. I shouldn't even say this, but for the first time in my life—I'm frightened. (*FOOTSTEPS are heard off, then JUDAS enters L.—stops just inside arch—then crosses to up c. before MARY stops him. MARY rises quickly, speaking to MARY CLEOPHAS as she does so*) It's Judas! Judas Iscariot! He can tell us where they are! (*JUDAS halts at the sound of his name. MARY goes to him. JUDAS R. side in c. arch—MARY down L. of him*) My, but I'm glad to see you! We've been searching for hours!

JUDAS. (*Toward her a step—confused*) Searching?

MARY. For Jesus and the others! They're having supper near here, aren't they?

JUDAS. (*Stops toward her*) Yes—they are. But it's so late—

MARY CLEOPHAS. That's what I said. We could have stayed comfortably at Bethany and seen him tomorrow. (*Rises—steps toward c.*) But she thought something might happen—

MARY. You know how you'd feel. Is he all right?

JUDAS. Why, yes—of course—

MARY. If he is in any danger you've got to tell me. I've come all this distance—

JUDAS. Everything has been going on as usual.

MARY. But they say he is upsetting law and order in Jerusalem.

JUDAS. (*Evasively*) People use words lightly.

MARY. And that he breaks the Sabbath!

JUDAS. He doesn't know the meaning of time.

MARY. You're hiding something from me! What is it?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Chidingly*) Mary! (*Crosses step toward MARY*) After all, his safety must mean as much to Judas as it does to you— (*To JUDAS*) She's been so worried.

MARY. (*Barely hearing* MARY CLEOPHAS) He isn't in trouble—with important people—that is—who might do him some harm?

JUDAS. (*Haltingly*) It's—it's hard to say—such a mixed crowd here in Jerusalem. You're bound to offend someone—sooner or later. Of course he knows he runs that risk—but he won't listen to any one—

MARY. When did you see him last? Did you have supper with him and the others?

JUDAS. I left early.

MARY. Oh, then they're still there! (*MARY crosses to MARY CLEOPHAS—JUDAS follows her. To MARY CLEOPHAS*) We'll get to him after all!

MARY CLEOPHAS. Is it very far?

JUDAS. About fifteen minutes' walk.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*To MARY*) *Fifteen minutes!* (*To JUDAS*) All right, lead the way.

JUDAS. (*Crosses to MARY*) I can't. I'm—I'm—in a hurry. I have an errand—(*His voice trails off.*)

MARY. (*Turns to him*) If you'll tell us how to get there—

JUDAS. (*Steps down R. a little and nervously says:*) You go down that way—(*Points L.*) until you come to a wide cross-street—and there's a fountain in the middle—a square one. You turn left there and go straight along until you reach the street of the water-sellers—

MARY CLEOPHAS. How'll we know it?

JUDAS. There're always donkeys tied to the racks.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Not at *this* time of night!

JUDAS. (*Impatiently*) There'll be a lot of water jars standing about. You can't miss it. (*He is eager to get on his way.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. Now, let's get this straight. I've had all the wrong directions I want in one evening. (*She repeats directions slowly, to his intense nerv-*

ousness) We go down that way— (*Points L.*) until we get to a wide street. (*She stops*) I didn't know there *were* any wide streets in Jerusalem.

JUDAS. I mean—wider than this.

(*WARN Curtain.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. —and there's a fountain—

JUDAS. (*Impatiently*) Then you turn left—

MARY CLEOPHAS. —and find the street of the water-sellers. And the house is there. Which house is it?

JUDAS. The third house. It has a balcony.

MARY CLEOPHAS. What's the man's name?

JUDAS. Nathan!

MARY. (*To MARY CLEOPHAS*) Can't you see he's in a hurry? (*To JUDAS*) Don't worry about us. We'll find it quite easily now. (*JUDAS crosses to c. arch. Pause*) I hope we haven't made you late.

JUDAS. (*Faces R. in a strangled voice*) No. There is still time.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Grudgingly*) Good night.

MARY. Good night. And thank you. (*JUDAS turns to her*) You're sure no harm can come to him?

JUDAS. He says no one can destroy him.

MARY CLEOPHAS. What does he mean by that?

JUDAS. (*With panic in his voice*) I don't know! I don't know! (*He rushes off c. to R.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. Another fifteen minutes!

(*BOTH have turned and start off L.*)

MARY. (*Crosses to MARY CLEOPHAS below her*) Oh, it doesn't matter—now that we know where we're going. I'm so glad Judas left early!

(*TRUMPET as Curtain is coming down.*)

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE II

A house in Jerusalem. Night.

This is the upper room in the house of NATHAN, the water-seller. It is of good size with the main door leading from downstairs at down Right. A smaller door leads to a room up Right which cannot be seen. In the near wall are three windows as in Da Vinci's picture of the Last Supper, with practical shutters. A window down L. The shutters are open.

The room is bare save for a long table which runs across the stage, Center back. Scattered around the table are thirteen small cushioned hassocks—empty now, but pushed away at various angles by the recent diners. On the table are candlesticks with the candles still burning—the remnants of a meal (roast lamb, bread, honey, fruit, etc.) and at Center of the table is a large silver goblet and a flagon of wine. A chair down L.

The stage is empty at rise of Curtain. Hold long enough for the significance of the set to register. Then MARY and MARY CLEOPHAS enter through the door down Right and stand staring at the empty room.

MARY. *(In great disappointment)* Oh, we're too late! They've gone! *(Crosses below table.)*

MARY CLEOPHAS. *(Goes above table and looks at the food. Crosses L. above it)* Not long, though. The best thing we can do is sit down and wait. Someone'll be coming along to clear away the food.

MARY. *(MARY starts, indecisively, to cross towards*

a seat) If we'd only been a few minutes sooner! Or if we knew where they've gone.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*L. of table*) You see, Mary—I was right. We shouldn't have come.

MARY. (*Below R. end of table*) Oh, I'm so disappointed! I *counted* on seeing him.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Moves stool from L. of table to L.C. below and against table*) Better sit down and rest awhile.

MARY. I—I don't know as we ought to stay. After all, we're strangers. They might not like to walk in and find us sitting here. (*She looks around, distressed and uncomfortable.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Sitting on stool she just moved*) I don't like to be disagreeable, Mary, and I'm not one to complain— (*Pauses, then adds with a dry smile*) Well—not overmuch—but I'm not going to walk one more step on those cobblestones until I know *where* I'm going—and *why*!

MARY. (*Crosses to down R. door*) There must be somebody around here who can tell us— (*Turns L.*) I wish we'd asked Judas what this errand was. That might have given us some idea. (*By table*) I hope they gave him a good supper. (*Below table.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises*—BOTH *stand below stool*)
—MARY R.—MARY CLEOPHAS L.) I hear someone coming.

MARY. Maybe he's come back! Don't say anything about what a hard time the boys are having. Anyway—not at first.

(*She turns expectantly. MARY MAGDALEN enters, down R., pausing in surprise and alarm. She is plainly dressed but carries her clothes with a certain air. She has beautiful red hair. MARY and MARY CLEOPHAS turn to her.*)

MAGDALEN. (*Just inside door down R.*) What are you doing here? Who let you in?

MARY. Why, no one. The door was unlocked.

MAGDALEN. Who are you looking for at this hour of the night?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Irritated*) Are you the woman of the house?

MAGDALEN. (*One step on*) No, I'm not. Who do you want to see?

MARY. (*Moves toward MAGDALEN*) We're looking for Jesus of Nazareth.

MAGDALEN. Who told you he'd be here?

MARY. Judas. He showed us the way—

MAGDALEN. (*Looks out door R.*) Judas! I thought he'd gone with the others—

MARY. We met him in the street alone.

MAGDALEN. (*Crosses toward MARY*) Where was he going?

(MARY CLEOPHAS *regards MAGDALEN curiously.*)

MARY. He didn't say. He seemed in a great hurry. He just told us how to get here—surely this is the place. (*Pause*) Hasn't Jesus been here?

MAGDALEN. (*Again secretive*) They've all gone.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Below stool*) Why, I know who you are! You're from Magdala, aren't you?

MAGDALEN. I *was* from Magdala.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Selima told me about you.

MAGDALEN. Selima talks too much. (*Pause*) Who are you?

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Indicates MARY*) This is the mother of Jesus.

MAGDALEN. (*Is dismayed at learning MARY's identity. Steps back*) Oh, I'm so sorry—I had no idea—

MARY. I'm glad to know you. You're a friend of my son— (*Steps to MAGDALEN and takes her hand.*)

NATHAN. (*Off R.*) Magdalen! Magdalen!

(MARY crosses to MARY CLEOPHAS. NATHAN enters down R.)

MAGDALEN. (*Turning*) Yes— (*Sees NATHAN— is greatly agitated, tries to quiet him and keep him from speaking before the two women.*)

NATHAN. (*Below and R. of MAGDALEN*) They bought swords tonight! Jesus told them to even sell their cloaks if they had to—but to get swords!

MAGDALEN. (*Quieting him with a look*) You're just in time to meet some friends of Jesus! Well, not friends, exactly. This is his mother and—

MARY. (*Indicating MARY CLEOPHAS*) And my sister.

NATHAN. I never thought about his having a family!

MARY. Is anything wrong? Anything about my son?

MAGDALEN. No. Just something about the house. Nathan is the proprietor here. It was he who made all the arrangements for the supper tonight.

NATHAN. And he'll never get a better one! Not if he lives to be a hundred! Fit for a king!

(ROMAN TRUMPET is heard.)

MARY. The Roman soldiers!

(NATHAN crosses to R. window. MARY and MARY CLEOPHAS step back L. and face NATHAN across the table—about Center of it.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*L. of stool*) My sister met some in the street.

NATHAN. (*At window*) What were they doing?

MARY. Getting orders to go somewhere.

NATHAN. (*Turns down to table*) Did you hear where?

MARY. Why—yes, I did. Let me think. (*Pause*)
Is there someone here called—Pilate?

MAGDALEN. Yes—there is.

(*NATHAN crosses down L. down of MAGDALEN.*)

MARY. Well, it was his house they were going to.

MAGDALEN. (*Again warning NATHAN—puts her hand out to NATHAN to stop him*) Probably to quiet some disturbance. There's always something happening in Jerusalem—especially at this time of the year—holiday crowds—

NATHAN. (*Steps to MARY*) I don't believe you ladies had better wait here. There's no telling when he'll be back—

MARY CLEOPHAS. I'm not going another step for anybody! (*Sits on stool below table.*)

MARY. But where has he gone?

NATHAN. They've just gone for a walk. In the hills, I guess.

MAGDALEN. They often go up Gethsemane way. There's some gardens there.

NATHAN. I haven't any rooms left. I could direct you to another place—

MAGDALEN. (*Sharply—crosses to NATHAN, R. of R. stool*) You can't turn them out at this hour of the night! Let them wait here. (*NATHAN turns to MAGDALEN in protest—she quiets him with a touch on his arm*) I'll be responsible. (*To MARY*) They're very strict about closing time for eating houses—

NATHAN. Yes—that's it.

MAGDALEN. (*Continuing*) But don't worry. You can stay right here.

MARY CLEOPHAS. That's good sense!

MARY. If he's gone to the gardens—maybe I could look for him there. (*To NATHAN*) I don't like to inconvenience you—

MAGDALEN. It's a hard, rough road—besides,

you'd never find it in the dark. I know what we *could* do— (*To NATHAN*) we could send your boy with a message—

NATHAN. It's getting pretty late—

MAGDALEN. Oh, he won't mind. Tell him to— (*She breaks off and turns to MARY*) Wouldn't you like to talk to him yourself—tell the boy just what to say?

MARY. Yes, I would.

MAGDALEN. He's down in the kitchen. (*NATHAN starts to object. MAGDALEN steps downstage. NATHAN goes off down R. MARY follows*) Show her the way, Nathan. (*Looks after her, then turns back to MARY CLEOPHAS, her manner one of urgency and warning. MAGDALEN crosses to MARY CLEOPHAS*) You must get her out of Jerusalem!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Startled*) What's that?

MAGDALEN. Get her away from here! Take her home!

MARY CLEOPHAS. You mean—there's going to be trouble?

MAGDALEN. Yes.

MARY CLEOPHAS. But what kind of trouble?

MAGDALEN. None of us knows! That is, none of us—except—

MARY CLEOPHAS. Except who?

MAGDALEN. I think Jesus knows. He tried to tell the disciples tonight. To prepare them. (*Pause*) He was like a man going on a far journey!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises—crosses down R.*) Then she must see him before he goes—

MAGDALEN. (*Below R. end of table*) It's not safe for her to stay here. Not safe for anyone who is close to him— (*Remains at down R. corner of table.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*To down R. door*) I begged her not to come! But I couldn't stop her. No one could. I never saw her like that before. It's as if she knew something was going to happen. (*R. of table to c.*)

window) I tried to tell her he was all right but since we got here, I haven't been so sure. (*Suddenly remembers*) Tonight while I was waiting for Mary in the street, I asked a woman if she knew him. (*At L. corner of table*) Well, I knew he wasn't popular with everyone—but the things she said about him! I was glad his mother didn't hear them! And this woman—who had never even seen him—acted as though she hated him!

MAGDALEN. That's it. (*Crosses to R. window*) His most bitter enemies are people like that. People who've never heard him speak, who don't even know what he teaches. But they're afraid he'll upset the old order of things. So, because they fear him—they hate him.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*To L. end of table*) But if he knows all these things—why does he stay?

MAGDALEN. (*At R. window*) He says he must wait until what is written has been done.

MARY. (*Enters down R., relieved at having sent the message. Crosses below table to R. of stool*) Well, the little boy has gone to tell him that we're here. I *do* feel better—

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Around L. of table to L. of stool*) That's good! Now perhaps you'll sit down and rest yourself. (*Puts her arm around MARY and sits her on stool. To MAGDALEN*) She's been on her feet the whole day—and we're neither of us getting any younger.

MAGDALEN. (*To MARY—crossing R. of table to below R. stool*) Is this your first visit to Jerusalem?

MARY. Oh, dear, no. I came quite often as a girl. And then when my children grew up, I came with them. I've even been to Egypt!

MAGDALEN. Really? (*MARY CLEOPHAS crosses to chair L.; sits*) I've never travelled *that* far.

MARY. I didn't care much for it. But my husband—he was a carpenter—he got a lot of building ideas.

(*Pause*) If you're not too busy, I wish you'd stay and tell me about my son. I'm so *hungry* for first-hand news of him.

MAGDALEN. (*To R. of MARY*) I'd love to.

MARY CLEOPHAS. We hear such mixed-up stories back home. He says one thing here in Jerusalem and by the time it's repeated all the way to Nazareth—well, you can imagine how it sounds! So she just had to come and find out for herself.

MARY. I've always tried to think of my other children—to see their side of it. Suddenly I couldn't any longer—It was as if they all just melted away. I didn't *have* any other children.—Only this one—and he was in trouble.

MAGDALEN. (*Turns to get stool R. of table—sees cloak*) Oh, he's left his cloak! (*Takes cloak—looks off R., holding it.*)

MARY. (*Holding out her hand for cloak—MAGDALEN gives it to her*) Isn't that just like him? Never thinks of himself. But I don't see why some of those disciples can't think of him once in a while. (*She cradles it in her arms.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. Oh, they're too busy worrying about themselves! Who'll sit at the right hand and who'll sit at the left! So he goes out in the cold without a cloak! Just let something go wrong—When you get into trouble you find out who your friends are!

MAGDALEN. He knows that. That's what makes him so wonderful.

MARY. (*Surveying cloak*) And it's torn, too! If I had a little thread I could mend it while I was waiting—

MAGDALEN. Leah usually keeps some up here. (*She looks around*) Oh, I know—it's in the next room. (*She exits up R.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Rises—crosses to L. of MARY*)

Mary, I think we ought to go home—back to Nazareth, I mean—

MARY. Without seeing him!

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well—no—but as soon as you do—

MARY. Oh, once I've seen him I'll do whatever he says.

MARY CLEOPHAS. This is no place for us to be.

MARY. But you were the one who didn't want to go any further—

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well, I feel differently now.

MARY. (*Gestures towards R.2*) Not because of *her*?

MARY CLEOPHAS. No. She's a real nice woman. You'd never think she'd led that kind of life.

MARY. S-sh—she'll hear you!

MARY CLEOPHAS. There must be something to the things he teaches—to change a person that way.

MAGDALEN. (*Returning with needle and thread*) Will this do?

MARY. Oh, thank you— (*Taking it*) yes—it's good and strong.

MAGDALEN. (*Moving L. candelabra close to MARY*) There, I think you'll have enough light.

MARY. (*Starts to sew. Looks up with smile*) How this takes me back! When he was a little boy his knees went through everything! He played so hard. (*MARY CLEOPHAS sits down L. in chair*) And when he grew up and went into the carpenter shop he worked the same way. Never knew when it was time to stop.

MAGDALEN. (*Gets R. stool—moves it R. of MARY—sits*) He's like that now. Works until he drops. He has so much he wants to say—he seems almost afraid he won't have time to say it. (*She quickly covers this ominous note by adding*) The other day while he was talking it grew dark without his even knowing—and the people stayed on and listened—way into the night.

MARY CLEOPHAS. He always was a good talker. It's a real gift. (*Yawns.*)

MARY. What did he talk about that time?

MAGDALEN. About a shepherd who lost one sheep. And how he left the whole flock and searched and searched the night through until he found it. And how happy it made him and what it meant to him to bring that one lost sheep back into the fold. I love that story.

(MARY CLEOPHAS is asleep.)

MARY. How I wish I could have been here and heard these things! But I feel easier in my mind about him—talking to you. Please tell me more. Do great crowds gather when he preaches?

MAGDALEN. I should think so! You know how fond he is of little children? Well—the other day when he was preaching a lot of them gathered around and someone complained. But Jesus said if having the children running about shouting and laughing while he preached annoyed the older people—then *they* could leave. That Heaven itself was made up of the innocent and the simple-hearted.

MARY. (*Looking at sleeping sister-in-law*) There's something I want to ask you—while my sister's asleep. I want to ask you—about the miracles. (*Breaks thread and puts needle on table.*)

MAGDALEN. I—I can't say much about the miracles. They just *were*. (*Pause*) Of course, he performed a great many more in the beginning when he first started out on his work. But lately he's turned more and more to teaching. Telling people the way to live. And a great deal about understanding and forgiveness. And the beauty of human life. I don't believe he thinks miracles are very important. He always says a man isn't really any better after seeing something spectacular than he was before. He'd

much rather talk about loving them than hate you than raise the dead. After all, he's not concerned with the death of the body. But the disciples—they'd like more miracles. Excitement—and the crowds. But he does less all the time. There is one thing he wants them to believe above everything. It underlies every word he says—it is the very foundation on which his whole teaching is built.

MARY. And what is that?

MAGDALEN. The dignity—and the greatness of man. People criticize him for calling himself the Son of God. They forget how much more often he calls himself the Son of Man. Because Man is God—and God is Man.

(ROMAN TRUMPET is heard outside. MAGDALEN rises in alarm; looks R. MARY sees this. MARY CLEOPHAS does not waken.)

MARY. You feel you owe a great deal to my son, don't you?

MAGDALEN. (Turns to MARY) Without him—I am nothing.

MARY. Then you must tell me the truth about him. Is he in danger?

MAGDALEN. (Searching for an evasion) There is no greatness without danger.

MARY. But why? What does he say or do or teach that anyone could possibly find fault with?

MAGDALEN. (Almost bitterly) He blesses the poor and the meek. And the hungry. (Sits as before) And those who weep. And he tells them all the same thing—rich and poor alike. "If you love me—take up your cross and follow me."

MARY. (Apprehensively) Cross!

MAGDALEN. That's a figure of speech he uses. He means—self denial. (Pause) And then—he blesses those who have sinned. I—I don't want to—to em-

barrass you—or bore you by telling you about myself. You probably know already—

MARY. Only what I've heard—and you can't judge people by that.

MAGDALEN. You looked just like him as you said that! But, you see, it's his acceptance of people like me that they condemn! This whole idea of repentance and forgiveness. No one ever taught it before. Being born again! Think what that means!

MARY. I can see what it means.

MAGDALEN. I was deaf—and now I hear. I was blind and now I see. *(Pause)* The world will never be the same—because he has lived!

(MAGDALEN, overcome with emotion, sinks down, her head in her hands. MARY, seeing her shivering, puts Jesus' cloak around her shoulders, then takes the silver chalice from table and offers it to MAGDALEN.)

MARY. Drink a little of this wine. It will warm you.

(As MAGDALEN is drinking the MURMUR of crowd outside starts. When ROMAN TRUMPET sounds it awakens MARY CLEOPHAS. MAGDALEN puts chalice on table. When trumpet sounds MAGDALEN and MARY look at each other in alarm—then MARY crosses around L. of table to window R. MAGDALEN to down L. window; closes shutter. MARY CLEOPHAS awakens and steps down.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. What's that?

VOICE. *(Outside)* Take him to Pilate!

(WARN Curtain.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. *(Rises—steps down c.)* Someone call me? *(TRUMPET call is repeated)* They're

certainly worked up over something— (*The NOISE is growing closer and louder.*)

VOICE. (*Outside*) Jesus of Nazareth!

(*Additional VOICES say "Jesus of Nazareth."* NATHAN bursts in R. MAGDALEN to L. window—closes shutter.)

NATHAN. (*From doorway*) Get away from that window! They've arrested him! (*Crosses up to window R.—closes it—crosses to c. window*) I don't want my house mixed up in this!

MARY. Arrested!

NATHAN. They're taking him to Pilate!

MAGDALEN. How did they know where he was? Who told them?

NATHAN. (*Closes shutter c. window*) Judas Iscariot.

MAGDALEN. Judas! But the other disciples—what were they doing?

NATHAN. (*Crossing down and out R. as he speaks*) Running for safety!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crosses down below stools*) Deserted him!

MARY. (*Stunned*) Arrested! I must go to him. (*Crossing to down R. door—MARY CLEOPHAS stops her.*)

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Crosses quickly toward MARY*) No, no! They've only trumped up some charge against him.

(*NATHAN exits as MAGDALEN, MARY and MARY CLEOPHAS cross to door. MARY makes no answer to her sister but at the doorway she stops, turns and goes across the room to the stool and picks up his cloak. All the others have gone.*)

MARY. He'll need this. They may keep him all night.

(As she starts again for the door down R. the SHOUTS in the street reach a crescendo and MARY stands, JESUS' cloak clasped in her arms, as she hears the words—"Crucify him! Crucify him!")

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE III

The house at Nazareth. Eight years later.

It is late afternoon, nearly dusk on a warm day in midsummer. The fig tree is heavy with green leaves and purple fruit. From the carpenter shop come occasional SOUNDS of someone working. It is SIMON in shop with work. The long table is against back wall Right of house door. A stool or chair Right Center.

NAOMI is busy at the up L. table. There is a small oil wick burning in a little basin and there is a three-branch candlestick on the table, unlighted with a taper beside it. The table is spread with a fine cloth and NAOMI is putting some plates and bowls on it. She moves rather quickly, humming a little to herself. As her back is turned to the wall, DANIEL, now a lad of sixteen or so, vaults the wall and lands in the courtyard with a clatter. NAOMI turns with a start.

NAOMI. Oh! Be careful, Daniel! You'll fall one day and hurt yourself!

DANIEL. (C. Laughing) Mother, you've been saying that to me ever since I can remember and I've never hurt myself yet! I just saw Uncle Judah hur-

rying down the street. Is he looking for old Beulah?

NAOMI. (*Nodding—crosses to him—BOTH c.*) They expect the baby any time now. (*Looks at him*) Daniel, go right in and change your shirt. It's a sight!

DANIEL. But I only put it on clean this morning!

NAOMI. This is afternoon and we're having company for supper. (*Pushes him. He crosses to stairs*) Important company. Now, hurry!

DANIEL. (*Stops on stairs*) Esther's young man? I heard Uncle Joseph talking about him.

NAOMI. Since you know—all right. Now get yourself clean and stay clean. (*Pushes him off.*)

DANIEL. Oh, all right!

(*DANIEL exits into the house; shuts door. NAOMI crosses to the shop and calls*)

NAOMI. (*L. of shop door*) Simon!

SIMON. (*Appears with some work in his hand in shop door*) What is it, Naomi?

NAOMI. Don't you think it's time you got washed and dressed?

SIMON. Is it late?

NAOMI. No—but everyone in the house will want to get ready at the same time. There won't be enough hot water to go round, and we don't want any fuss—especially with Judah's baby being born. I must say I do think Deborah might have waited a day.

SIMON. I'll just finish this and then I'll come. (*Goes in the shop.*)

(*REBA comes out of the house with horn. She blows a couple of long blasts.*)

NAOMI. (*To SIMON*) You see! She's calling Joseph! (*At table.*)

SIMON. (*In shop*) Have you got my clean things ready for me?

NAOMI. (*At table*) Everything's laid out.

SIMON. Wait a minute—

REBA. (*Calling from house*) Esther! Esther! Are you ready yet?

ESTHER. (*Off up L.*) I'm fixing my head-dress. Wait till you see how it looks.

SIMON. (*Coming out of shop*) Isn't that a new dress?

NAOMI. (*Nods—smiling*) Do you like it? (*SIMON kisses her*) I only have to put on my jacket when I hear them coming.

(*SIMON and NAOMI go into house—close door.*

ESTHER comes down stairs L. REBA enters from house; meets her by step C.)

ESTHER. (*She is wearing her hair braided like a coronet; over it a pale blue veil. REBA pulls her C. a bit. When REBA is at table speak:*) Look, Mother! Isn't it lovely? Grandmother wore it when she was a girl. (*JOSEPH enters gate as she speaks*) Oh, I'm so happy. Father! How do you think I look?

JOSEPH. (*Closes gate—with pride*) My, but you look pretty! Like your mother the day we became engaged. (*Takes her arm*) Do you remember it, Reba?

REBA. (*With a laugh*) Of course I do. I'm not so old that I've forgotten it! Go on, Joseph, get those dirty clothes off. (*JOSEPH starts for house door. ESTHER moves down L. Looks at them over her R. shoulder. JOSEPH crosses to ESTHER.*) Our guests should be here soon. Did you know—they're coming all the way from Damascus by camel?

JOSEPH. (*Surprised*) By camel? Are they that rich? I always wanted to travel by camel. (*Lowers*

his voice. Kisses ESTHER) By the way, have you warned Esther not to mention—you know?

REBA. (*Nodding*) Yes—she understands. (*MARY appears in doorway upstairs*) Be careful—here comes your mother.

JOSEPH. (*Turning quickly*) Ah, there you are, Mother! Had a nice rest?

MARY. (*Descending stairs*) I haven't been resting. I've been with Deborah. Poor child, she's so uncomfortable this hot day.

REBA. Do you think it will be soon?

MARY. Who can tell? A baby comes when it gets ready. Is Beulah on the way?

JOSEPH. Judah's gone for her. (*To REBA*) I'll hurry and change. (*He exits into house; closes door.*)

MARY. (*To L. of her—smiling*) I can't get used to it! My baby rushing after a midwife for *his* baby! (*Pauses*) It's nice, though. I never get over being grateful that Judah found a good wife after all. (*Another pause*) Nearly time for the guests, isn't it? (*With a smile for ESTHER*) Someone's getting impatient. (*Turns to ESTHER.*)

ESTHER. (*Shyly; crosses L.*) They say he's very handsome.

MARY. (*In mock surprise*) Handsome? Why, it seems to me someone said he was crosseyed and had a hare-lip—and walked with a limp. (*Turns to REBA*) Isn't that right, Reba?

REBA. (*Playing up to her*) That's what I heard.

MARY. (*Laughs. ESTHER laughs as she understands. MARY crosses to ESTHER below fig tree*) Still it wouldn't matter, would it—if he had a good character? (*Pats ESTHER's cheek*) Oh, Reba, will you take a look in the kitchen and see how the supper is getting on? (*REBA goes into house; closes door. To ESTHER*) Happy? (*Adjusts veil—embraces ESTHER—makes her sit L. of her on fig tree bench*) There,

that's better. Why, you're trembling! Here, now, we can't have that. There's nothing to be afraid of.

ESTHER. (*With a little gulp*) I'm going to live so far away.

MARY. Damascus is a good ways off—but, just think! You'll be head of your own house—no old mother-in-law to make life miserable, the way I do around here. And then before you know it, your babies will be coming along. Wait until you have your first one! Nothing makes you feel so important as your first baby. I'll never forget mine—(*Breaks off—a shadow crossing her face—rises; crosses to c.*) Look—there's the first star! (*Pause*) Like the one at Bethlehem. (*Throws off mood with effort*) There now, don't let me start talking about—about when I was young—or the company won't get any supper! Here they are now. (*Crosses to step c.* ESTHER runs into house calling, "Mother—they're here!") Joseph, Reba—they're here!

JOSEPH. (*Enters. REBA follows*) I'll go. (*He opens the gate and JUDAH enters with BEULAH, the midwife, at his heels. JOSEPH speaks in a disappointed tone*) Oh, it's you!

(SIMON and NAOMI enter from house and sit on fig tree bench. NAOMI L.—She ties his tie.)

JUDAH. (*Laughing—below gate*) That's a fine greeting for a prospective father.

JOSEPH. I didn't mean it like that. I thought it was our guests from Damascus and I rushed out only half dressed.

(BEULAH stops to greet JOSEPH. JUDAH motions her on—she crosses to down L.)

JUDAH. (*To MARY*) I thought I'd never find Beulah. Half the women in Nazareth picked out today

to have babies. *(To BEULAH. JOSEPH shuts gate)* Hurry upstairs, will you, Beulah? You know the way.

BEULAH. *(Crosses to stairs—JUDAH follows—rushes her)* With my eyes shut!

MARY. Do you need any help?

BEULAH. *(On stairs)* Not yet. If we do later, I'll call you. *(Starts upstairs.)*

JUDAH. *(Calling after her—R. of stairs)* Be sure you make it a boy!

BEULAH. *(Turning on stairs)* I'll do my best—but you should have thought of that sooner.

(MARY to table. ALL laugh. BEULAH continues upstairs. JUDAH follows her.)

JOSEPH. *(R.C. to REBA, smoothing his clothes)* Am I all right now?

REBA. You look fine.

(JOSEPH paces L., then to gate, restless for MARY CLEOPHAS' entrance.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. *(Enters gate)* Who's this prancing around like a peacock? *(JOSEPH turns to her)* Oh, it's Joseph. I've brought the wine. *(Up c. to MARY with jug)* How are you going to have it, hot with spices?

MARY. I think so. Yes—since we're going to eat outside we'd better have it hot.

MARY CLEOPHAS. *(Gives jug to MARY. JOSEPH shuts gate)* I can't think why anyone wants to eat outside! You never know what's going to fall in your food. For heaven's sake, Joseph, light somewhere! You're not the bride!

(Before JOSEPH can answer, the gate is flung open by MENDEL. JOSEPH crosses down to him.)

MENDEL. (*At gate*) They're here! I ran all the way from the market place as soon as I got out of their sight. (*Crosses to JOSEPH up R.C.*) I'm all out of breath! Someone give me a drink!

MARY CLEOPHAS. I knew he was leading up to that!

JOSEPH. (*Steps down*) Naomi, go in and tell Esther. (*NAOMI goes into house—taking jug from MARY*) Where are they now, Mendel?

(*JUDAH enters from upstairs.*)

MENDEL. At the Inn. Levan wouldn't hear of anyone seeing to his camels but himself. Special grain and all that. Spends money like a prince. And the boy! Handsomer than ever!

(*SIMON rises to talk with JUDAH upstairs.*)

JOSEPH. Shouldn't we have gone to meet them? After all—they're strangers here.

(*ESTHER starts from house to REBA. NAOMI follows her—stays L. of her.*)

MENDEL. Make us seem too anxious! I've left my assistant to show them the way. (*Sees ESTHER—crosses L. to L. of JOSEPH*) Ah—there she is! Looking like a picture! I saw a big sack full of presents for I wonder whom! You're a lucky girl!

REBA. All the luck isn't on our side, Mendel. You don't see a girl like Esther every day.

(*MARY CLEOPHAS crosses below ESTHER and REBA.*)

MENDEL. There's luck on both sides. That's what makes it a good match. (*He turns to JOSEPH.*)

(JOSEPH goes to gate. JUDAH starts upstairs—SIMON follows him. JUDAH stops on steps to talk over railing to SIMON. MARY crosses down R. toward MENDEL. JOSEPH closes gate. NAOMI, REBA and MARY CLEOPHAS are arranging ESTHER's veil.)

MARY. Mendel!

MENDEL. Mary! Oh, I'm sorry— (JOSEPH is close to gate) I didn't see you in all the rush. My, but you're looking well—and on a busy day like this! Your hands full with the engagement supper—

MARY. Never mind about the supper, Mendel. When you first met Leban and his son in Damascus last year—did you tell them all about our family?

(ALL move in a little. SIMON turns C.; listens.)

MENDEL. I should say I did! What a wonderful woman you are—what—

MARY. You're sure you told them about everyone?

MENDEL. I was at my best. You should have heard me. I went back five generations—I got them so tangled up in the family tree—

MARY. You left no one out?

(JUDAH goes off upstairs L. SIMON and NAOMI on house steps. Three RAPS at gate.)

MENDEL. They're here!

(There is a general scurry. ESTHER goes close to her mother, L.C. JOSEPH looks at ESTHER and REBA—then goes to gate. MARY detains MENDEL.)

MARY. You haven't answered me, Mendel.

MENDEL. (In a desperate whisper) Why stir that up again, Mary? You're a respectable family. You've

lived it down. (*As JOSEPH opens the gate MENDEL rushes forward; speaks at gate*) Leban!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Has come closer to MARY, on expression of pity on her face—L. of MARY*) I'd be awfully sure I was right before I said anything, Mary.

(*MARY nods. MARY CLEOPHAS pats her arm. The visitors—LEBAN and JOSHUA, his son, are entering the courtyard. There are ad lib. greetings between the MEN. JOSHUA steals glances at ESTHER, who has moved over to one side, alongside her mother. JOSEPH steps forward; closes gate.*)

MENDEL. This is Joseph, Leban—

LEBAN. This is my son Joshua.

JOSEPH. I'd like you to meet our womenfolk. (*LEBAN crosses up to MARY—MENDEL at gate*) Mary, my mother—and Mary Cleophas, my aunt—my wife—my sister-in-law—and my daughter, Esther! (*LEBAN and JOSHUA bow in time with each introduction. ESTHER gives one pleased look, then drops her eyes. JOSEPH, anxious to get them ALL in the house, is over-hearty as he adds*) And now—shall we go into the house and have a little glass of wine? Then we must go over the contract once more.

(*There is a murmur of assent.*)

MENDEL. I have suggested a little change. That if any of the donkeys are in foal their young are included in the dowry.

JOSEPH. Yes, yes, of course!

MENDEL. And very good luck if they are—sign of a large family. I'll make that change when we get inside.

JOSEPH. Then, when everything's signed, our

young people here— (*Indicating ESTHER and JOSHUA*) —can have a little chat and get acquainted.

MENDEL. (*With professional sentiment*) Well, if looks mean anything they're not exactly strangers—even now!

(*There is general laughter. The YOUNG COUPLE look confused and embarrassed. JOSEPH gestures towards the house.*)

JOSEPH. It's cool inside—

(*ESTHER crosses to R. of L. table. REBA stands behind and below her.*)

MARY. Just a moment, Joseph. (*To LEBAN*) I'm sorry to interfere at the last minute like this—but since no one else will speak, I'm afraid I'll have to. I can't let this go on without saying something.

MENDEL. (*One step c.*) Please, Mary—don't be unreasonable!

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Step down L. of MARY*) Be quiet, Mendel.

(*JOSEPH looks at REBA and makes a helpless gesture.*)

LEBAN. (*Puzzled*) I don't understand.

(*There is a buzz of whispering among the family. MARY silences it with a little gesture. A dead silence follows.*)

MARY. What I have to say isn't easy. You see—(*There is a painful pause*) —we had a little trouble in our family— (*She falters.*)

LEBAN. Yes?

MARY. (*Summons her courage and forces herself*

to a complete statement in one sentence. As she speaks the stage begins to slowly darken) My oldest son—he got into some difficulty with the authorities.

LEBAN. (*Hesitantly, to MENDEL*) Is that James—the one who's away?

MARY. No, not James. The one I mean is dead. (*Pause*) He was killed.

LEBAN. (*Sympathetically*) Oh, I'm sorry. An accident?

MARY. They thought he was trying to stir up trouble and they—they crucified him.

LEBAN. Crucified him?

MARY. (*With sudden desperation*) Don't you see what I'm trying to tell you? My son was Jesus of Nazareth! (*Her voice breaks.*)

(There is a long pause. LEBAN looks questioningly from one face to another but the FAMILY avoid his gaze, not knowing that he is trying to conceal the fact that the name means nothing to him. JOSEPH breaks into the silence, anxiously, when LEBAN looks at him.)

JOSEPH. (*Eagerly, in a rush*) You're not going to let this come between the young people, are you? After all, it's a long time ago, and outside of that no one can say a word against us. Everything we told you about our family is true.

MENDEL. Absolutely true.

JOSEPH. I admit we did leave that out—about my brother. Maybe we shouldn't have—but my daughter's happiness means a lot to me. (*His voice breaks a little*) I didn't want to spoil her chances.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Who has been watching LEBAN*) Save your breath. The man's never heard of him!

(The OTHERS stare at LEBAN with incredulity.)

LEBAN. Well—you see—I'm afraid I live so far away—

(General reaction.)

MARY. He was quite well known.

(They are upset—a little indignant over LEBAN'S ignorance.)

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well known! He was the talk of the country! When he came to a town you couldn't find a place to sleep.

(ALL relax.)

JOSEPH. Do you remember that time in Capernaum? *(To LEBAN)* We heard so much we went there to see him—and the place was packed! We couldn't even get near him. Imagine, his own family!

SIMON. *(Crosses down L. of MARY CLEOPHAS)* He made towns important that no one had ever heard of before. And he had all sorts of offers from neighboring places.

JOSEPH. And then, he was always the guest of the local Synagogue. He'd preach there on Sundays.

LEBAN. He was a Rabbi?

MENDEL. Not a regular Rabbi.

SIMON. *(Quickly—sits fig tree bench. NAOMI stands R. of him. MARY CLEOPHAS crosses up L. of MARY)* They called him that.

MARY. He wasn't interested in what people called him. That was one of the things he tried to teach his disciples.

LEBAN. He had disciples?

MARY. They hung on every word he said—

SIMON. —when things were good. But they didn't stand by him so well when he got into trouble—

MARY CLEOPHAS. Stand by him! They ran like rabbits!

MARY. I hear now and then that some of them are keeping on with the work. I hope it's true. It'd be a shame to have it all lost. He worked so hard—never took any care of himself. You know—looking back—I've often thought he knew he wasn't going to live long.

SIMON. There was some talk of people seeing him again—after—

(MARY CLEOPHAS *back to and touches* MARY.)

MARY. I used to wait for him. I thought surely if he came anywhere it would be here, to his home. But he never came.

LEBAN. (*Moves to* MARY) What did he teach?

MARY. Why—to—love your enemies—never to judge or condemn anyone—to be forgiving. And to make life as easy as you could for other people. (*Pauses—groping for the most important things*) To live for a purpose in which you believe and never let anyone keep you from your belief—not even your own family. You must be willing to die for it. And not to be afraid of people who kill the body. Because, after that, there is nothing more they can do. (*Pause in which she feels she must make this last point dreadfully clear—and searches for the right words*) And to remember always that human life is beautiful—and noble—because it houses God. (*She is aware of startled look on* LEBAN's *face—and extends idea*) I mean—when you degrade or dishonour human life—you degrade and dishonour God. (*There is a moment of dead silence*) That was all he taught.

LEBAN. Has anyone ever tried it—to live the way he taught?

MARY. I don't think so.

LEBAN. Might be interesting to see what would happen if they did.

MARY CLEOPHAS. (*Thoughtfully*) It's too simple.

MARY. (*Turns to her*) You know, I think that's what caused all the trouble. They couldn't understand that it was all just as simple as that. That there wasn't something behind it. So they accused him of trying to attack the Government.

LEBAN. Then it was a political offense?

MARY. I guess you'd call it that. (*Embarrassed*) I—I never really quite understood. (MARY CLEOPHAS *takes her arm*) They hurried me out of the city—I think he told them to. I never saw him again.

(*KNOCK at gate—MENDEL crosses to gate.*)

MENDEL. (*Opens gate*) It's the Rabbi! Now we can get down to business.

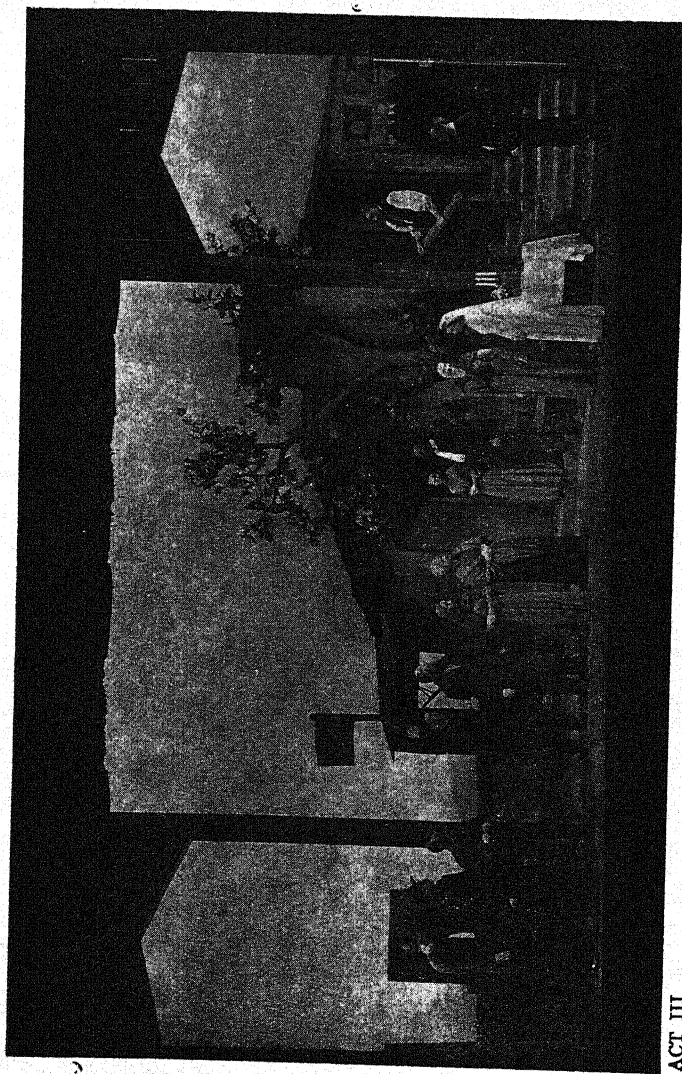
(*JOSEPH and LEBAN prepare smiles for the RABBI. Tempo of scene becomes brisk. LEBAN crosses down stage.*)

RABBI. Well, well. How's everything?

JOSEPH. (*Steps to RABBI*) Fine! (*Glances at LEBAN, who makes no denial*) Just fine! This is our Rabbi Samuel. (*To the OTHERS*) How about that glass of wine now?

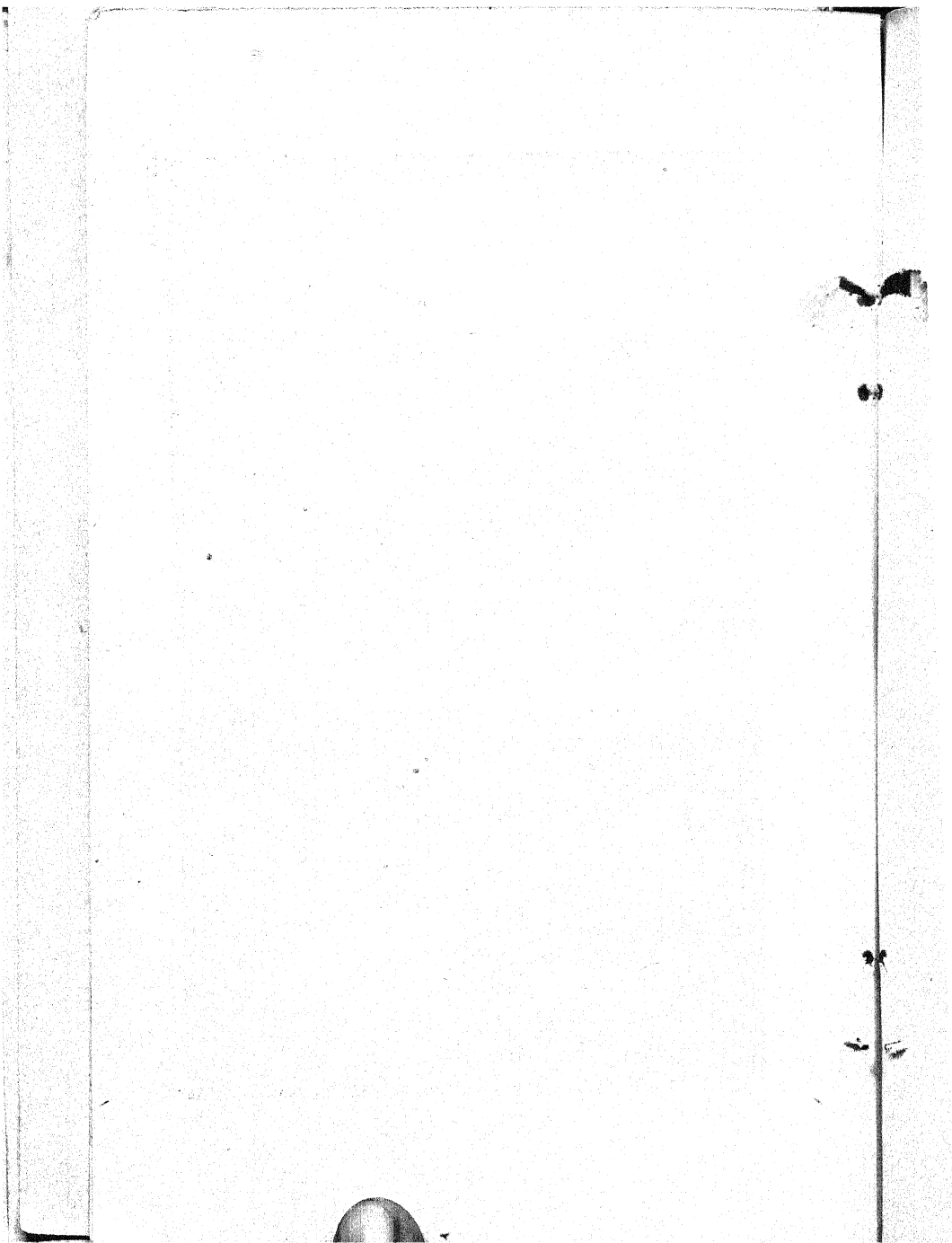
(*ALL assent, with ad lib. lines. RABBI goes off into house with LEBAN, R. of him. JOSEPH and JOSHUA next. REBA and ESTHER start almost with JOSEPH and JOSHUA. ESTHER and JOSHUA give each other a look. SIMON calls to MENDEL and they go with NAOMI.*)

JUDAH. (*Enters L., stops at foot of stairs*) Everything go all right, Mother? Did they sign?



ACT III

See page 123



MARY CLEOPHAS. They're just doing it.

(*WARN Curtain.*)

JUDAH. That's fine.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Well—how are things going?

JUDAH. A little slow.

MARY CLEOPHAS. Then it'll be a boy! They're unobliging—even before they're born! (*Exits into house.*)

MARY. (*With careful casualness*) If the baby's a boy—what are you going to name him?

JUDAH. We haven't decided.

MARY. I wish— (*She pauses.*)

JUDAH. What, Mother?

MARY. Will you do something for me, Judah?

JUDAH. Of course I will! What is it?

BEULAH. (*From upstairs*) Judah!

JUDAH. (*Calling up*) Coming! (*He starts up two or three steps, MARY going a step or two with him. He stops—*)

MARY. (*Looking up as she speaks*) If it's a boy, will you name him after your brother— (*Hesitantly*) After Jesus, I mean?

JUDAH. Why—why, yes, Mother. I'll talk to Deborah about it— (*He leans over the railing of the staircase and kisses her.*)

MARY. It's a nice name— (*Pause*) I'd like him not to be forgotten—

(*JUDAH runs up the stairs and MARY stands alone for a moment on the stage. The light has faded and it is nearly dusk. MARY turns and goes towards the up L. table, picks up the taper and lights it from the little wax wick, and then lights one of the three-branched candlesticks. As she does this—*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

FAMILY PORTRAIT

ELECTRIC PLOT

COVERAGE OF LIGHTS

PIPE No. 1 SCENES II, 2-1, 2-2, 3-3

Left to Right

- No. 1. Gel. 17. On bench—Left end
2. 17. On bench—Right end
5. 54. Stage Left—Steps and top landing
6. clear Frost on gate—down Right
7. 62. House door—Left Center
8. 62. to hit low on Left bench and steps
9. 54. Up Right corner and carpenter shop
12. clear House door—Left Center.
14. 17. Left Center—Center immediately below step. Ch. on mark 2-2
15. 54. Lower step. Left.
18. 17. On Center of bench Left

SCENE I-II INN SCENE

17. 62. On table Left Center (on platform)
same

SCENE III-I

STREET OF JERUSALEM

16. 29. On pump—Left Center
3. 70. On arch—Right Center

ELECTRICAL PLOT

131

SCENE III-II

UPPER ROOM

4. 62. On stool—Right Center (on mark
—not set for opening)
13. 17. Left stool—Right Center (on mark
—not set for opening)
11. 70. On arch Right
- PIPE No. 2. (above No. 1) Scenes 1-1, 2-1, 2-2, 3-3
- 1A 54—cut-out Gate—down stage Right
- 3A Center stage (chair in 2-2)
- 4A 29 Up Right. Carpenter shop
- 6A House door—Up Left Center
Scene 3-2
- 2A Up Right
- 5A Up Left

TORMENTORS

Left

Lower

- No. 1 17-frost Table down Left Sc. 1-1
- 2 Double frost across stage, above gate. 1-1
- 3 62 Table Left. 1-1
- 4 26 Across stage front. 1-1

Right

1. 17-Frost Across stage on table. Sc. 1-1
2. 70 Up stage. House door 1-1
3. 62 Center. House door 1-1
4. 29 Up stage on house. 1-1
- 4X No color. To hit stage Right on porch and
both sides post. Sc. 1-2

<i>Fronts Left to Right</i>	<i>Gelatine</i>	<i>Coverage</i>
1	17	Fronts cover down stage generally
2	29	
3	54 Frost	

ELECTRICAL PLOT

4	54
5	29
6	62
7	29
8	17
<i>X-Rays—1st Border</i>	
G	29
	26
<i>Foots</i>	29 & 54
<i>Ground Row</i>	
	29, 31, 41
<i>Side Arms and Up Rights and 2d Border</i>	
	29, 31, 41
<i>Projectors, Right and Left</i>	
	54, 41
<i>Unit Lights</i>	
Alternate colors	
3	62
3	54 Frost

6 X is an extra tormentor spot ab. 4-Right

ACT I—SCENE I

Spot No.	Opening Mark	Dim on cue to
		X = Full up
1, 2, 5, 15	X	2
7, 8, 9, 18	X	2
6A, 12, 14	4	10
T.R. 4, T.L. 4	4	10
6	X	10
1A, TR. 2, T12	4	7
TR. 1, TL. 1-3	X	5
3A, 4A, TR. 3	4	
2A, 5A	X	3
L. & R. Xray	2	10
Pr. L. Sun	X	
Pr. L-R. Moon	X	10

ELECTRICAL PLOT

133

Fronts

2,7 X 7

3,4 4 9

5,8 4 9

Foots

L.C. 5 Out

R. 6 Out

Border 2nd

Gel. 29 X 7

Gel. 54 7 First out

Gr. Row

Gel. 29 4 8

Gel. 41 3 7

Side Arms—up Right to S.A.

Left-Gel. 41 X 8

Left 29 X 8

Right-Gel. 41 X 8

Right-Gel. 29 X 10

ACT I—SCENE II—WINESHOP

Fronts

1,6 5

3,4,5,8 6

Foots

C. 4

Spot No.

Tor. L. & R. 4 5

10

17

Tor. L. & R. 1 X

TR 6X X

Feeder for unit

Border—2—

Gel. 29 4

Gel. 41 X

Gel. 54 5½

Gr. Row

Gel. 29 4

Gel. 41 X

Side Arms—Up rights

L. & R.

Gel. 41 & 29 X

ACT II SCENE I

HOUSE AT NAZARETH

Fronts Mark

1,6,2,7 3

3,4,5,8 5

Foots

L.C. 6

R. 8

Spots

1,2,5,8,6 X

6A,12,14 X

TR.L.&R.4,3,1 X

1A,TR.R.&L.2 3

3A,4A, X

2A, 5A X

L. & R. X-ray X

R. & L. Pro. Sun X

Border 2nd

Gel. 29 & 41 X

Gel. 54 5½

Gr. Row

Gel. 29 4

Gel. 41 X

*Side Arms and Up Rights**Left and Right*

Gel. 29 & 41 X

ACT TWO—SCENE II

Fronts

1,6 4

2,7 5

ELECTRICAL PLOT

135

3,4,5,8	6
<i>Foots</i>	
L.C.	6
R.	7½
<i>Spots</i>	
1,2,5,15	3
7,8,9,18	3
6A,12,14	8
<i>Ground Row</i>	
Gel. 29, 41, 31	6
<i>Side Arms and Uprights</i>	
Gel. 29 L.&R.	6
Gel. 31 L.	6
Gel. 41 L.	7
TR. R. & L. 4	X
6	5
1A. TR & TL 2	4
Tr. 1, TL. 1,3	3
3A, 4A	X
2A, 5A	5
L & R X-ray	2
Pro. L. Sun	5
Pro. Moon. L&R	5
13, 16	5
<i>Border—2nd</i>	
Gel. 29	5
Gel. 41	5½

ACT THREE—SCENE I

STREET IN JERUSALEM

<i>Fronts</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>On Cue</i>
2, 7	6	
<i>No Foots</i>		
<i>Spots</i>		
TL. 4	9½	
TR. 1. TL. 1&3	8	
L.&R. X-ray	6	
3, 16	6	

ELECTRICAL PLOT

SCENE II

UPPER ROOM IN JERUSALEM

Fronts

2, 7 5

Foots

C. 7

Spots

6 6½

TR., TRL. 4, 11 7

4, 13. Loader 5

2A, 3A, 4A, 5A 4

TR. 2 6½

TL. 2 10¼

Border *Gel. 41 X

SCENE III

HOUSE AT NAZARETH

Fronts

1, 6 6 9

2, 7 7 10

3, 4, 5, 8 7 10

Spots

1, 2, 5, 15 5 7

7, 8, 9, 18 4 5

6A, 12, 14 6 10

TR & L. 4 6 10

6 7 10

1A 4 10

TR. & L. 1 5 6

3A, 4A, TR. 3 X 10

2A, 5A 5 10

TR 2 5 10

TL 2 9 10

Moon-Pro.L&R 7 10

ELECTRICAL PLOT

137,

*Border—2nd*Gel. 29 7 $9\frac{1}{2}$ 4I $6\frac{1}{2}$ 7*Gr. Row*Gel. 29 $6\frac{1}{2}$ 8

3I 7 7

4I 5 6

*Side Arms and Uprights**Left*Gel. 3I 8 $9\frac{1}{2}$

Gel. 4I 8 8

Gel. 29 $8\frac{1}{2}$ $9\frac{1}{2}$ *Right*

Gel. 4I 7 8

Gel. 29 9 9

Gel. 3I 7 9

FAMILY PORTRAIT

MUSIC PLOT

ACT ONE—SCENE ONE

Festeburg No. 1 Volume 5 tone 50 Curtain up
on last notes. Curtain should be $\frac{1}{2}$ way up when
record stops.

SCENE TWO

Sailor's Song Vol. 7 tone 50. Start when unit
moves on. Play through—no fade. Curtain up
when ready.

ACT TWO—SCENE ONE

German chimes V6199B. Vol. 15 tone 50. Start
when house is out. Fade out slowly when curtain
reaches top.

On cue—"Queen's Chimes" start at Vol. 24 to 5 for
finish. Tone 50.

then "German Chimes." Start at Vol 30 to 5 for
finish. Tone 50.

Slight build on "He's here"

Full up for curtain.

When curtain is down fade right out on "Queen's
Chimes," more slowly for "German Chimes." Must
be silent for curtain up on next scene.

MUSIC PLOT

139

ACT THREE—SCENE ONE

All trumpets tone 30

House out— Trumpet #8 Vol 7.

Repeat at once Vol 15. Curtain up with repeat.

Cue 1. Trumpet #5 Vol. 32.

2. Trumpet #2 Vol. 35

3. Trumpet #3 Vol. 35

4. Street Cry. Fade in at Vol. 40 build to 25.
Tone 50.

5. Trumpet #1 Vol. 10.

Curtain Down—

Jerusalem chorus Vol. 10. Tone 50 when finished right into Street Cry Vol 25 Tone 50. When curtain is up fade Street Cry off at end of phrase after first spoken lines.

SCENE TWO

Cue One Trumpet #3 Vol. 25

Two Trumpet #2 Vol. 25

Three Trumpet #3 Vol 12 repeat immediately at 12. On repeat bring in crowd noise record at 40. Build to 30. Four Trumpet #8 Vol 2. Curtain down with #8.

Repeat #8—while repeating take off Crowd record.

Humming record Vol. 10 Tone 50 until ready for curtain.

SCENE THREE

On cue fade in Festerburg #2 very softly. Vol. 40 Tone 50. After last line in play bring up to highest point—not too fast. Curtain should hit stage as record finishes.

FAMILY PORTRAIT

PROPERTY LIST

Off Right—Act I—Scene I

Small wooden bowl (barley bowl for MARY CLEOPHAS)

Bottle of fresh water for JUDAH's milk jug.

Stick for MORDECAI.

Wineshop set on platform. Act I, Scene II.

On Bar—

4 mugs, 1 towel, 1 slate with slate pencil, 1 leather cup with dice (padding in cup), 1 small metal cup with coins, 1 small paper pad and black crayon.

Shelves behind Bar—

Cups and bottles attached to cupboard—2 practical jugs filled with wine.

Table A—1 mug, 1 plate bread and cheese, 1 pepper shaker, 2 chairs.

Table B—Plate of bread and cheese, mug, 1 chair.

Table C—Plate of bread and cheese, 2 mugs.

Table D—Plate of bread and cheese, 4 mugs.

Down Left off platform 1 small barrel, against flat a string of fish.

Down Right 2 barrels, fishline for child, fish net on porch.

In ceiling—Lantern—not practical.

Act Two, Scene One

Market basket. Large covered basket with white cloth and chicken feet protruding for MARY CLEOPHAS.

PROPERTY LIST

141

6 dark red plates for HEPZIBAH.
2 small bundles for JOSEPH and SIMON.
1 large brown bundle, not practical (for EBEN).
Small bag for EBEN—from I-II.

Act Two, Scene Two

Small straw sewing-basket peg of blue thread, 2 darning needles threaded and stuck in side of basket, scissors, thimble, pieces of cloth.

Blue shirt—unfinished hem for MARY to sew on. Threaded needle stuck in collar. All thread must be fine and easily broken.

Act Three, Scene Two

Dark thread on peg and threaded darning needle off up R. entrance. Be sure thread is easily broken.

Act Three, Scene Three

Straw-covered glass bottle with wine for MARY CLEOPHAS. Large carpet bag for BEULAH.

Act One, Scene Two

Off Left

Small brown canvas bag, stiffened, for EBEN. Contains scarves: 1 red, 1 ivory damask, 1 red and gold, 1 roman striped, 1 blue with self fringe. Several strings of colored beads.

1 silver tray for waiter. 1 towel.

3 mugs.

1 plate bread and cheese.

4 yellow pottery bowls with soup.

4 metal spoons.

1 metal plate with fish—1 metal fork.

1 large dark brown chip basket with cover—for FISHERMAN.

1 small leather bag—papers and crayon—for MATHIAS.

Paper and crayon for JUDAS.

PROPERTY LIST

Act Two, Scene One

Small basket of whole wheat bread cut to resemble figs.

Large wooden bowl of unshelled peas.

Smaller pottery mixing bowl for shelled peas.

Laundry—3 sheets, 2 pieces colored (towels), 14 towels, 2 white tablecloths—1 red check, 1 blue check.

Act Three, Scene One

2 large pottery water jars.

1 tin cup.

In Kitchen

Large safety pin for MARY.

Large oblong wooden tray containing 10 small wooden bowls, 10 wooden spoons, 10 napkins (folded), ten brown and white pottery mugs, 1 blue and white tablecloth (folded).

Large wooden bowl of applesauce with metal ladle (peaches).

3 small brown cups with eggs and small metal spoons (sliced).

1 empty pottery pitcher—for milk.

1 large pottery pitcher filled with fresh clean water.

1 towel.

Act Two, Scene One

Large pastry board with small bowl of flour, lump of dough, towel.

Cup of fresh water—for MARY.

Act Two, Scene Two

6 dark red plates.

Small wooden boat for DANIEL.

Act Three, Scene Three

2 medium size vigil candles—blue glass.

Box of safety matches.

- 2 wax tapers.
- 2 vases of flowers.
- 1 brass 3-branched candlestick.
- 1 small dish with water in it (for extinguishing tapers).

On Landing at Top of L. Steps

- 1 small potted red geranium.
- Clothesline and 8 towels.

On Stage

Act One, Scene One

- Small three-legged stool.
- Prop plans.
- Wood chips.
- Hammer, assorted tools, saw, frame of wood, in carpenter shop.
- 3 tool kits.
- 1 wooden chair.
- Wood basket.
- Large wooden table on saw-horse.
- Long wooden bench.
- Short wooden bench.
- 2 cow-bells.
- 1 large fig tree with bench around it.

Act One, Scene Two

- 3 barrels.
- 2 fish nets.
- 2 strings of fish—to hang on wall.
- 2 square tables, 1 round table, 1 long table with bench.
- 1 stool.
- 5 rush-seated chairs.
- 4 plates of bread and cheese, 10 mugs.
- Curtains in windows.
- 1 slate with pencil.
- 1 paper pad with crayon.

PROPERTY LIST

- 1 leather cup with dice.
- 1 pewter cup with coins.
- 1 towel.
- 2 practical wine jugs.
- Peddler's practical bag with scarves and jewelry.

Act Two, Scene One

- 3-legged stool.
- Large table on saw-horse.
- Long bench.
- Short bench.
- Wooden chair.
- Wheel.
- 2 clotheslines.
- 3 sheets.
- Pile of towels (about 2 doz.)
- 4 tablecloths—2 colored, 2 white.
- Small basket of figs.
- Large wooden bowl of unshelled peas.
- Small pottery bowl of shelled peas.
- 2 cowbells.

Act Two, Scene Two

- 3-legged stool.
- Wheel.
- Table top only.
- Short bench.
- Chair with blue shirt and sewing-basket.
- 2 cowbells.

*On Stage Props.**Act Three, Scene One*

- 1 broom.
- 1 shutter bar.
- 1 pump on platform—with post and hanging lantern
with candle.
- 2 large pottery water jars.

Act Three, Scene Two

Dark red curtains at two doors—on poles.

One 11-foot table with cloth painted as is da Vinci painting set for 13 people with pewter plates and silver glasses, wooden forks, napkins.

Leg of lamb on platter.

Silver and glass bottle of wine.

Silver chalice of wine.

2 three-branched candlesticks of brass with guttered candles—I still burning in each candlestick.

2 low wooden stools with hard red cushions attached.

1 wooden chair (from Act I—Scene I).

Jesus' cloak.

Plug-shelves with wooden bowls, silver cups, etc.

Row of fake chairs behind table.

Practical shutters.

Act Three, Scene III

2 cowbells.

Long table with white damask cloth.

1 three-branched candlestick.

1 large wooden bowl filled with leaves or fruit.

Pewter plates and forks.

4 red mugs.

Vase of cornflowers.

Pewter jug of wine.

Square table from Act I, Scene II.

1 three-branched candlestick.

1 small dish with water (to snuff out taper).

1 box safety matches.

1 vase daisies (fire-proofed).

2 wax tapers.

2 medium-sized vigil lights in blue glass holders—
both lit.

COSTUMES

ACT I—SCENE I

MARY—Red and blue striped dress, blue apron.

DANIEL—Green woolen pants with braces of same material attached. Short-sleeved faded blue shirt, brown woolen vest, soft shoes.

NAOMI—Yellow dress with small red print flower. First entrance white apron. Second entrance no apron, carries yellow shawl.

MARY CLEOPHAS—Dress of dark red mixture (red and black), lighter red sweater, very faded, ties in front, short sleeves. Soft shoes.

JUDAH—Faded brown duck pants. Light belt, blue shirt, russet vest, grey apron, no tie. Hat and cloak.

REBA—Soft green dress. Soft shoes.

SIMON—Brown cord. pants, light belt, grey shirt, no tie. Coat.

JAMES—Oxford grey pants, black long jacket, light shirt, black tie, dark belt. Hat.

JOSEPH—Light tan shirt, brown sacking apron with bib, grey duck pants, no tie, belt. (No tie on first entrance.) Brown felt hat.

MORDECAI—Dark brown cord. pants, long brown woolen coat with wide cuffs and collar. Brown woolen vest, light shirt and black tie. Grey felt hat.

SHEPHERD—Grey-green pants (WAITERS 1-2), black and red goods shawl, brown hat.

ACT I—SCENE II

WOMAN—Brown and white cotton print, fringed yellow shawl over head.

AMOS—Black shoes. Light tan shirt. Grey apron. Grey-green duck pants. White socks.

MARY—Same dress. No apron. Grey cloak with hood over head. Brown bag.

MATHIAS—Light brown cord. pants. Long brown woolen coat with wide cuffs and collar. Light shirt, red neckerchief, black shoes. Brown, flat-crowned wide-brimmed hat. Black leather bag. Light belt.

JUDAS—White shirt, black tie. Long grey-blue coat—no collar or lapels. Black pants.

SELIMA—Bright red dress, fine black stripe. White apron and white kerchief on head. Short sleeves, white cuffs.

EBEN—Dark brown cord, pants. Brown woolen short coat. Light brown scarf, brown hat, brown shoes, light belt.

SIMON—Add brown woolen coat, wide collar and cuffs, olive drab color.

PEOPLE IN WINESHOP—

Blue cap, grey sweat shirt, black pants and shoes.

Blue cap, white shirtsleeves rolled up, brown cord. pants—no belt.

Brown woolen vest and same scarf. No coat or hat. Rest same as MORDECAI, Act I, Scene I.

Dark plum plaid dress. Rose-tan colored head shawl.

Purple dress—dark red head shawl.

Blue jeans, light shirt, light blue vest, brown hat, brown shoes.

Blue jeans, blue sweat shirt. For FISHERMAN add rubber boots, blue jean jacket and blue cap.

Brown woolen pants, braces same. Light blue shirt, light brown stockings, soft shoes.

Act Two—Scene One

MARY—Same as Act I, Scene I. Grey apron.

HEPZIBAH—Green-brown poplin dress, fringed silk shawl (green).

SIMON—Carries bundle.

JOSEPH—Carries bundle. Brown tie, sleeves rolled. In shop puts on vest and rolls down sleeves, removes apron.

MARY CLEOPHAS—Black and red fringed shawl (woolen) instead of sweater.

HADRIAN—Brown jodphurs and puttees. Greyish-green woolen pants, tunic and cloak. Same color sweater for sleeves, under tunic. Dark red band across tunic, wide leather belt and cuffs. Metal helmet.

DANIEL—Light brown felt hat—light tan shirt—no vest.

REBA—Same dress—blue and white apron.

NAOMI—No change—wears apron.

ANNA—Blue and red plaid cotton dress (mostly blue).

PEDDLER—Same as Act I, Scene II.

JAMES—Same.

Act Two, Scene Two

ANNA—Same.

HEPZIBAH—Same.

MARY—Same dress, no apron.

DANIEL—Wears vest.

JOSEPH—Wears vest, no apron, no tie, narrow leather belt.

SIMON—Same—no apron, no vest.

MARY CLEOPHAS—Same.

JAMES—Same.

JUDAH—No apron, black tie (narrow).

RABBI—Black flat hat, wide brim. Long black woolen coat with round flat collar, no cuffs. Black pants and shoes. Black tie.

MENDEL—Black flat hat, not so wide-brimmed as RABBI'S. Brown and black mixed tweed short coat, black pants, black shoes, black tie.

Act Three, Scene One

WOMAN—Same as Capernaum with no shawl but with grey apron.

EXTRA WOMAN—Same as Capernaum, with blue crepe cape, hood down.

MARY CLEOPHAS—Green dress, lighter green cape, hood down, brown scarf.

MARY—Dark deep bright blue dress, grey cape, hood up (Cap).

JUDAS—Same, carries flat hat.

MAN—Black wrap (like SIMON'S Act III, Scene III coat).

BOY—Same as Act I, Scene II.

Act Three, Scene Two

MAGDALEN—Black over mulberry.

Act Three, Scene Three

JOSEPH—Brown cord. pants. Long jacket, red and black check. Light shirt, dark tie, belt. Wears apron and no coat or tie for opening.

SIMON—Grey cord. pants, black long jacket, light tan shirt and dark tie.

REBA—Light and dark wine-red striped dress with darker wine-red neckerchief and sash.

MARY CLEOPHAS—Dark green dress, rose shawl.

JOSHUA—Black cord. pants. Mixed grey and black wool coat. Black flat hat, black tie, black belt, black shoes. No collar or cuffs.

NAOMI—Rose and blue dress—puts jacket on after opening.

DANIEL—White shirt, brown cord. pants, red tie, blond wig.

MARY—Blue dress. Rust-rose shawl over head.

BEULAH—Grey cloth around head, brown cloak, carpetbag.

JUDAH—Light shirt, rust tie, dark duck pants, light belt, dark brown vest.

MENDEL—Same.

LEBAN—Long brown coat with wide cuffs and collar, dark grey pants, small flattish hat.

ESTHER—Light blue dress, grey sandals, white net veil, blue forget-me-not spray on veil.

RABBI—Same.

FAMILY PORTRAIT

PUBLICITY THROUGH YOUR LOCAL PAPERS

The press can be an immense help in giving publicity to your productions. In the belief that the best reviews from the New York and other large papers are always interesting to local audiences, and in order to assist you, we are printing below several excerpts from those reviews.

"Lenore Coffee and William Joyce Cowen have written a deeply poignant play— It asks a simplicity of acceptance to equal the simplicity and reverence of its writing."—*New York Sun*.

"It is beautiful and dignified. It breathes the spirit of humility and tolerance. It is reverent in its approach to those whose personal lives are so closely bound up with that of the Founder of Christianity. But it is also pitiless in its exposure of the blindness and faithlessness even of some of those who professed to follow Him."—*New York World-Telegram*.

"An honest and straightforward simplicity, a tenderness of feeling— The authors are concerned with telling a great and poignant story in simple and earnest fashion."—*New York Herald-Tribune*.

"'Family Portrait' sets an exalted mark in 1939 drama— A simple, eloquent and reverent picture of the family of Jesus— A beautiful play. A stirring

play. Written with honesty, compassion, simplicity and earnestness."—*New York Daily Mirror*.

"—fresh and poignant significance. Particularly in the character of Mary, which has been lovingly written; it makes simple observations which are profoundly moving. For Mary talks of Jesus with the moving sincerity of a woman who desperately wants to understand her own son and who takes disarming pride in his apparent success in the great world outside."—*New York Times*.

"I was particularly pleased with the humanistic emphasis throughout the production. It was quite in line with the trend of modern religious thinking which subordinates the theological to the human element."—Charles Francis Potter, First Humanist Society of New York.

"It is certainly grand to have such a show on Broadway at this time. It is very much needed."—George J. Everett, *Christian Science Monitor*.

"A play which in scholarly and reverent fashion stimulates people to make up their own minds as to what Jesus and His family were like is a boon to Christianity."—Elinore M. McKee, St. George's Church, New York.

"The reviewer has never been so profoundly moved by any play before! The depth of feeling is simply tremendous. Do not miss it."—Walter M. Howlett, Greater New York Federation of Churches.

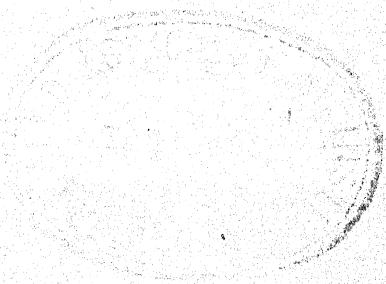
"The grasp of the heart of Jesus' teaching is most satisfying and the delicate reproduction of the principal characters is beyond any words of mine to praise. While it is artistically beautiful, it is intrinsically wonderful."—Finis S. Idleman, Central Church of Disciples of Christ.

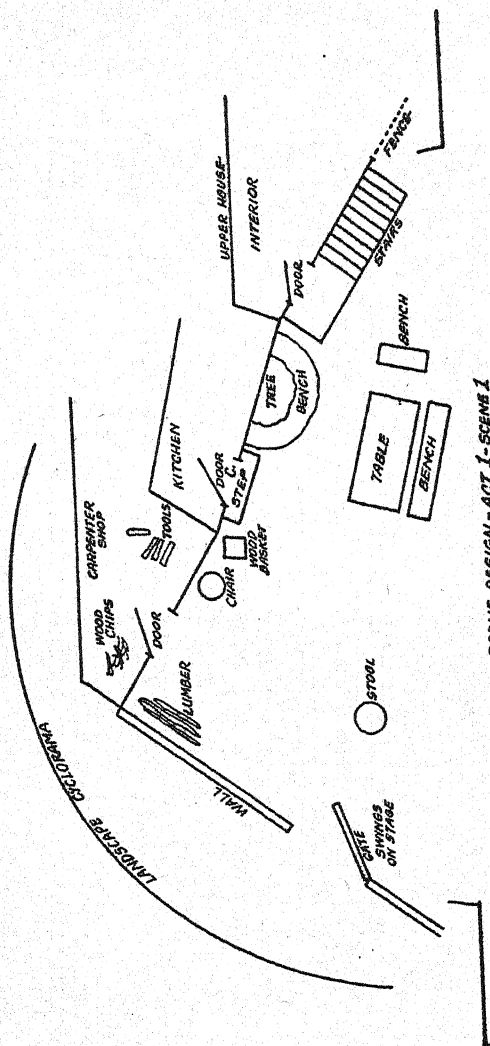
"To deal effectively with so compelling a theme without offending the beliefs of different groups within Christian life and within Jewish life is a task

of tremendous proportion. It seems to me that this task, however, was dealt with the greatest ability and talent."—Rabbi Joseph Zeitlin, Temple Anshe Chesed.

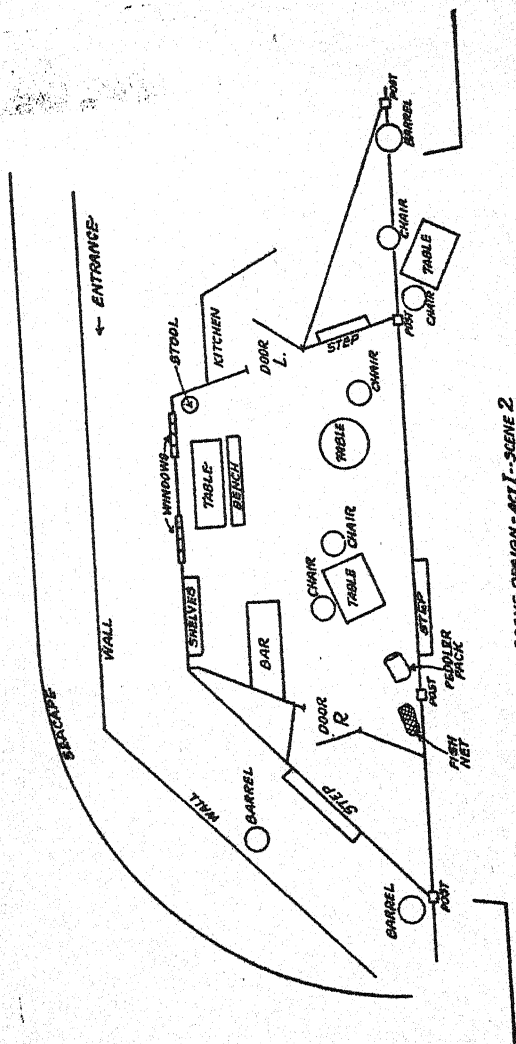
"I do believe that the play 'Family Portrait' is worth recommending and I am doing it on all occasions—"—Rodney H. Brooks, Saint Thomas Church.

"As a rule I do not recommend the theatre in Lent, but I do recommend this play whole-heartedly. Would that all mothers of men brought to the home and family life the understanding and the spirit of our Lord, interpreted through the acting of Judith Anderson."—Rev. George P. F. Sargent, St. Bartholemew's Church.



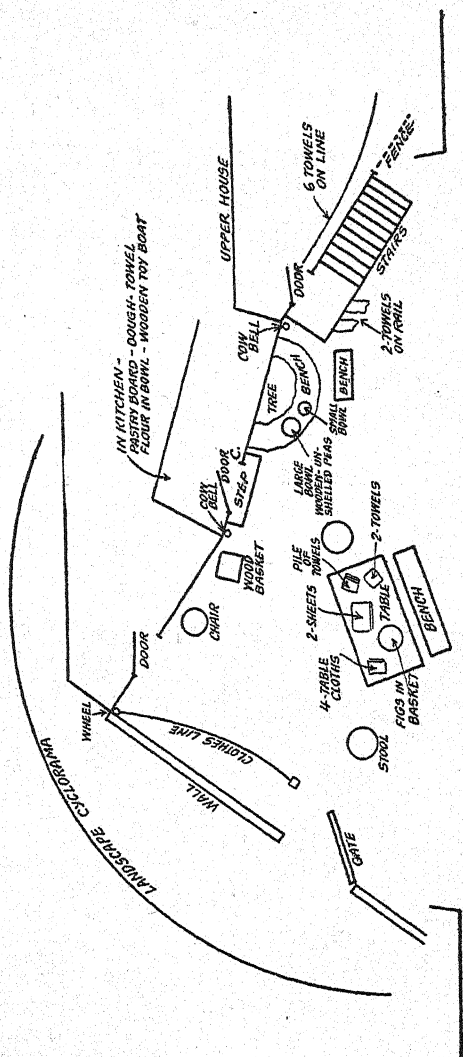


SCENE DESIGN - ACT I - SCENE 1
 "A FAMILY PORTRAIT"

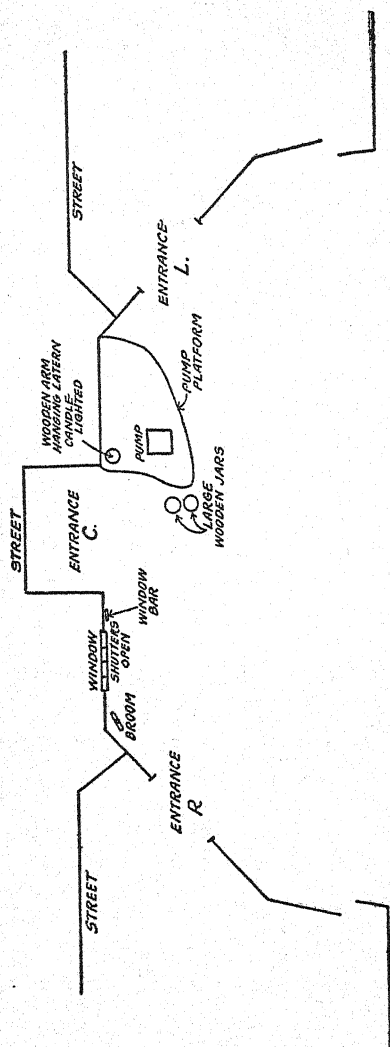


SCENE DESIGN - ACT I - SCENE 2
 "FAMILY PORTRAIT"

180
 36
 96

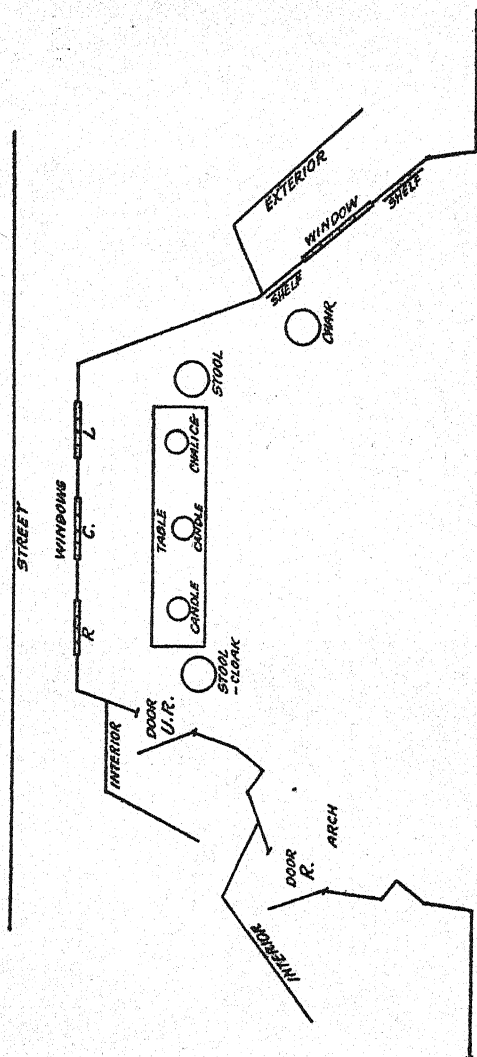


SCENE DESIGN - ACT II
"FAMILY PORTRAIT"

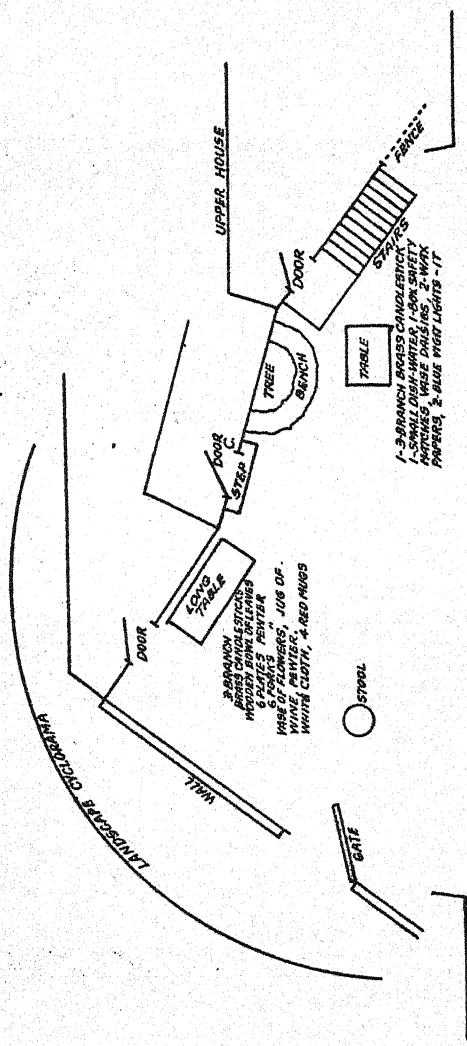


SCENE DESIGN - ACT III - SCENE I
 "FAMILY PORTRAIT"

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SCENE DESIGN - ACT III - SCENE 2
"FAMILY PORTRAIT"



SCENE DESIGN - ACT III - SCENE 3
"FAMILY PORTRAIT"

BACHELOR BORN

Comedy. 3 acts. By Ian Hay. 11 males, 6 females.
Interior. Modern costumes.

Produced with great success in New York and London. Charles Donkin, the gray-haired master of Red House, Marble-down School, is an amiable misogynist who is the object of veneration and fate's whim when he has suddenly dumped upon him three mischievous young ladies and their aunt, who have some vague sentimental claim on the old fellow's affections. The girls liven up the boys' school considerably; as a matter of fact, they play havoc with their fresh youth and gaiety. Since Donkin has quietly let promotions, etc., pass him by, the girls make it their business to enlist the help of the boys and bring the situation to the notice of the proper people. There are troubles along the way when a crusty headmaster, who is hated by all the boys, tries, out of fatuous malice, to get old Donkin sacked. Villainous though he is, he is unsuccessful, and the outcome of the rebellion is a successful one.

(Royalty, \$25.00.) Price, 75 cents.

HANDY MAN

Comedy. 3 acts. By Tom Powers. 5 males, 5 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

The chief character is an old man, who is a mixture of Puck and Rip-Van-Winkle. The other characters are amusing too: Two lovable young Russians, Prince and Princess, assorted Americans, an oh-so-British butler, the mother and several extras. It concerns a father, who ran off from his wife and children years ago, grew rich in Mexican oil and sent the money back. Now, after twenty years as unseen guardian angel, he comes back as Handy Man to the family, and, by his philosophy, his knowledge of the world, his wisdom and his humor, straightens out the problems of the wise wife whom he has never fooled for one minute. Basically, it is a play about the different social strata. The Russians are the top, Mrs. Bruce is America's best, Handy's daughters and his interior-decorator son-in-law are the eternal climbers, his wife, the simple, sane, best-there-is-anywhere, and he, himself, as he says, the bottom of the social scale. Handy says: "The middle people are so busy trampin' on the bottom, so as to see over the top, they just tread water and stay in the same place without touching either one." It's a funny play.

(Royalty, \$25.00.) Price, 75 cents.

